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ABSTRACT

Taken together, the contents of this document provide a picture of the Puerto Rican community, both on the mainland and on the island, in the mid-1980s. First, a brief overview of the Puerto Rican community is provided. Next, a demographic profile compares Puerto Ricans on the mainland with those on the island and both with the general U.S. population, in terms of: (1) general demographic data; (2) age; (3) educational data; (4) income; and (5) occupational status. Migration is also touched on, and a glossary of census terms and references is provided. The bulk of the document is devoted to three commissioned papers. The first of these, by Ramona Salgado, describes the structure and values of the Puerto Rican family and the types of services needed by the migrant family, and makes four specific recommendations for strengthening and reinforcing the family and its support systems. The second paper, by Jose Hernandez, addresses the absence among Puerto Rican youth of the power to be self-determining in social, economic, and political life. It suggests ways (and costs) of community empowerment, of improving the public schools, of recasting the Puerto Rican image, and of developing the community economically. A third paper, by Marta Tienda, ponders the current labor market status and future prospects of the Puerto Rican worker, examining the question of colonial status and Puerto Rican labor mobility, providing a socioeconomic profile, and making policy recommendations. The document concludes with a discussion of the future of the Puerto Rican community against the backdrop of the changes that have occurred in the U.S. in the 1980s. Tables, graphs, and bibliographies are featured in the document. (RDN)

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The National Puerto Rican Coalition, Inc. (NPRC) was established to further the social, economic and political well-being of Puerto Ricans throughout the United States and in Puerto Rico. It is a non-profit tax-exempt organization conducting research and analyzing public policies as they impact on Puerto Ricans. NPRC is a membership organization made up of organizations and concerned individuals. NPRC provides training and technical assistance to Puerto Rican organizations and is developing an extensive national communications network for Puerto Rican communities, community-based organizations, and individuals.

PUERTO RICANS IN THE MID '80S: AN AMERICAN CHALLENGE

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National Puerto Rican Coalition, Inc.
701 North Fairfax Street
Suite 310
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
(703) 684-0020

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PREFACE

As we enter the midpoint of this decade it is important to reflect on the aspirations, achievements and frustrations of our community. Defining the role of Puerto Ricans within the broad context of American society will be the greatest challenge confronting us in the decades to come.

The people who comprise the Puerto Rican community—more than 3 million residents of Puerto Rico and over 2 million Puerto Ricans who reside in the continental U.S.—are united by a common cultural and ethnic heritage. Even more fundamentally, Puerto Ricans are united as a community in search of greater economic, social and educational opportunities.

Understanding the Puerto Rican community in the mid-1980s requires an awareness of several paradoxes:

- On the island of Puerto Rico, unemployment today stands at 20.3 percent, higher than it was a decade ago. Unacceptably high unemployment persists on the island despite enormous efforts to create new jobs through unprecedented economic development which transformed Puerto Rico from an agrarian society to an urban, industrialized, high-tech society in the space of four decades.
- Although the standard of living in Puerto Rico is far higher than in any other part of the Caribbean region, one fourth of the island's residents migrated to the States in the last forty years in search of better economic opportunities.
- Because of economic downturns and discrimination in the States, many Puerto Ricans have increasingly returned to the island. Given the unprecedented back and forth migration, or what is now termed "circular migration", mainland and island Puerto Ricans are increasingly drawn together.
- Although Puerto Ricans have been American citizens since 1917, they are still generally perceived as "foreigners" in the States.

In 1976, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights released a report, "Puerto Ricans in the United States: An Uncertain Future," which detailed the socioeconomic status of the continental U.S. Puerto Rican community. The Commission's overall conclusion was that: "mainland Puerto Ricans generally continue to be mired in the poverty facing first generations of all immigrant or migrant groups. Expectations were that succeeding generations of mainland Puerto Ricans would have achieved upward mobility. One generation later, the essential fact of poverty remains little changed. Indeed, the economic situation of the mainland Puerto Ricans has worsened over the last decade."

The situation for mainland Puerto Ricans has not improved notably in the '80s—we are still disproportionately represented amongst the poor and that new class "the underclass." At the same time the island community has also been mired in stagnation with little or no growth.

As we look ahead over the balance of the decade with the awareness that the national political agenda has been charted for the better part of the '80s by the reelection of President Reagan it is obvious that we face a great challenge to work with our political leaders to move our community out of its present situation.

Louis Nuñez
President

INTRODUCTION

A major highlight of the 1984 NPRC conference was the presentation of commissioned papers on three important aspects of Puerto Rican community development: Puerto Rican Youth Empowerment by Dr. Jose Hernandez; the Puerto Rican Worker by Dr. Marta Tienda; and the Puerto Rican Family by Dr. Ramona Salgado. NPRC also prepared a demographic profile of the Puerto Rican community.

The three papers present diverse views on the theme "Building a National Puerto Rican Community: Growth, Development and Empowerment," primarily from a mainland perspective. Marta Tienda's paper discusses the current labor market status and future prospects of the Puerto Rican worker. Jose Hernandez' paper presents research evidence to support a wide-ranging program for Puerto Rican youth empowerment. Ramona Salgado's paper focuses on the present realities and future development of the most fundamental institution of the Puerto Rican community, the family. The demographic profile compares key social, economic and employment statistics in Puerto Rico and the mainland with statistics on the general U.S. population.

Taken together the three papers, plus the review of the Puerto Rican community as well as the Demographic Profile provide a picture of where the community finds itself in the mid-eighties. It also provides valuable insight into the problems faced by various segments of the community as well as specific recommendations for action.

It is apparent that national awareness of our current situation, its history and its prospects for the future is almost non-existent.

This publication represents a first step in engaging national policy makers in a dialogue on the future of the Puerto Rican community.

An Overview: The Puerto Rican Community

Puerto Rico: Early History & Government

On November 19, 1493, Puerto Rico was claimed for Spain by Christopher Columbus, during his second voyage to the New World. The island—about 100 miles wide and 35 miles long—was called Borinquen by its several thousand Taino Indian inhabitants.

In 1508 Juan Ponce de Leon was named governor, and the first European settlement was established on the island at Caparra, across the bay from modern San Juan. Although Spain's interest in Puerto Rico was initially sparked by the hopes of discovering vast amounts of gold, colonial Spanish authorities soon turned to agriculture, establishing a plantation economy on the island. This economy relied first upon the labor of the island's Indian natives, and later upon the labor of West African slaves.

During four centuries of Spanish colonial rule, the island developed into a multiracial Hispanic society. In the addition to the white settlers from Spain and black slaves from West Africa who came to Puerto Rico in the first three centuries of Spanish colonial rule, new groups migrated to the island during the 19th Century.

Spanish loyalists came to Puerto Rico from Central and South America in the wake of pro-independence revolutions. Frenchmen came from Louisiana when it was purchased by the United States and from Haiti when slaves revolted. In the 1840s, labor shortages brought Chinese workers to Cuba and Puerto Rico. The richness of Puerto Rican society was also enhanced by the migration of Italians, Corsicans, Lebanese, Scots, and Irish to Puerto Rico during the 19th Century. Largely as a result of this immigration, Puerto Rico's population increased six-fold during the 19th Century to nearly one million people.

In 1898, U.S. troops landed on the south coast of Puerto Rico, during one of the last engagements of the Spanish-American War. The following year, Puerto Rico was ceded to the United States by Spain under the Treaty of Paris.

Following two years of U.S. military rule on the island, a civilian government was established by passage of the Foraker Act of 1900. This civilian government, headed by a Governor appointed by the President, provided for some

limited elements of self-government. At the same time, however, the Foraker Act mandated that English—rather than Spanish, the native language of the Puerto Rican people— be used as the language of instruction in the island's schools. This arbitrary and irrational policy was not rescinded until 1948.

In 1917 Congress passed the Jones Act which increased the island's role in government. More importantly, the Jones Act—passed on the eve of America's entry into the First World War—conferred citizenship on all Puerto Ricans, with the concomitant requirement of obligatory military service.

The current governmental structure of Puerto Rico, and the status of its relationship with the United States, has remained unchanged since 1952. In that year, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico—described as "a permanent union between the United States and Puerto Rico on the basis of common citizenship, common defense, common currency, free market, and a common loyalty to the value of democracy"—was established.

While the establishment of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico enlarged self-government on the island, it did not confer upon island residents all the rights usually associated with citizenship. Indeed, although Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens, island residents do not vote in U.S. presidential elections, are represented by a non-voting Resident Commissioner in the House of Representatives, and have no representation in the U.S. Senate.

Economic Development in Puerto Rico: The Last Fifty Years

Even before the onset in 1929 of the Great Depression, the Puerto Rican economy was in difficulty. The island's chief source of revenue—agricultural exports, especially sugar and related products—declined significantly during the 1920s. And in 1928, Puerto Rico was hit by hurricane San Felipe, the worst in a century, which resulted in 300 deaths and the destruction of 50 million dollars worth of property including all but ten percent of the island's coffee plants.

At the outset of the Great Depression in 1929, Puerto Rico's Governor, Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., reported that "sixty percent of the children of the entire island are undernourished." By 1933, two-thirds of the Puerto Rican workforce was unemployed, and previously undernourished children and adults were literally starving. Puerto Rico was described as "a scene of almost unrelieved misery" during the Depression.

In 1935, the Puerto Rican Reconstruction Administration (PRRA) was established to implement the New Deal programs of the Roosevelt Administration. Although many of the ambitious PRRA projects, including a number to reorganize agricultural productions, failed to meet their objectives, several projects provided a basis for post-depression economic development. In addition

to starting island-owned factories, the PRRA developed an island-wide hydroelectric system and established a government-owned cement plant.

In the early 1940s, the government of Puerto Rico began to emphasize the attraction of private capital, especially for manufacturing industries, as a primary economic development objective. In 1942 the government established the Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company (PRIDCO) as a vehicle for attracting outside investment capital. PRIDCO was an early forerunner of the local development corporations which today attract capital investment to States, counties, and municipalities throughout the U.S.

To step up capital investment following World War II, the Puerto Rican government reorganized and expanded the island's economic development program. In 1950, an Economic Development Administration (EDA) was created to supplement the work of PRIDCO. EDA and PRIDCO, together known as Fomento, launched "Operation Bootstrap" to promote the island's economic development.

The Puerto Rican government has, over the last three decades, used multiple strategies to expand and diversify the island's economy. In addition to providing various exemptions from local taxes for businesses moving to the island, Fomento has constructed physical plants and has carried out training programs to accommodate the needs of new corporate employers.

Puerto Rico's economic development activities have attempted to respond to and capitalize on the dramatic advancement of technology. Anticipating expansion of commercial airline travel after the war, the island moved quickly to develop its tourism industry.

In 1949, Puerto Rico's first modern tourist hotel, the Caribe Hilton, opened. Although Puerto Rico was not a popular tourist spot at the time, within seven years the government had recouped its $7 million construction investment in the hotel by leasing the resort to the Hilton chain. The island's efforts to stimulate the tourism industry through capital construction, employee training, and promotion have paid off handsomely. In 1950, Puerto Rico played host to 65,000 visitors. Last year, more than 2 million people traveled to Puerto Rico.

In the period of two decades, from 1950 to 1970, Fomento's activities literally restructured the economy of Puerto Rico. By 1955, industrial net income exceeded agricultural net income for the first time, and the island's adjusted gross product grew by more than 300 percent between 1950 and 1970.

A key factor in Puerto Rico's development has been U.S. tax law. Section 936 of the Internal Revenue Code (and Section 931 prior to 1976) provides exemptions from Federal taxation on the income of U.S. corporations operating primarily in U.S. possessions. While economists disagree over the precise effects of Section 931 and Section 936, there is consensus that Federal tax incentives have played a critical role in transforming Puerto Rico—once called the "poorhouse of the Caribbean"—into the modern industrial society.

Social Change in Puerto Rico: The Last Fifty Years

The rapid modernization of the Puerto Rican economy has fundamentally altered the character of life on the island. To appreciate the profundity of this change, one need only remember that the U.S. industrial revolution spanned almost a century while the economic transformation of Puerto Rico from an agrarian society to an urban, high-tech society occured in less than half that time.

Industrialization spurred urbanization in Puerto Rico. In 1940, approximately 70 percent of the island's population lived in rural areas. Forty years later, the urban/rural distribution of the population had reversed. According to the 1980 Census, 67 percent of the island's population lived in urban areas.

Improved nutrition and health care has extended the life expectancy of island residents from 46 years in 1940 to 73 years today. Puerto Rico's rate of life expectancy, dramatically higher than other areas in the Caribbean–Latin American region, is now the same as that for the continental U.S.

Over the last forty years, the government of Puerto Rico has devoted almost a third of its budget to education. This investment has produced significant results. In 1940, only half of the island's school age children were receiving an education, and one-third of the adult population was illiterate. Today, 93 percent of school age children (age 5–18) on the island are enrolled in school, and less than 8 percent of the population is illiterate. Despite this progress, the educational outlook for island residents is still bleak; less than half of the students who enter first grade ever graduate from high school.

The expansion of opportunity for higher education in Puerto Rico has been impressive. In 1950, approximately 12,000 island residents were enrolled in college and university programs. By 1980, the number of students attending institutions of postsecondary education had increased to more than 130,000. Today, Puerto Rico students attending island institutions of higher education constitute more than one-fifth of the entire U.S. Hispanic college enrollment.

Although Puerto Rican family income has increased dramatically over the last four decades, the average income of island families is far below the U.S. average. In fact, it is substantially lower than in any of the 50 States.

The Puerto Rican Community in the Continental U.S.

While Puerto Ricans have lived in the continental U.S. for more than a century-and-a-half, the development of the continental Puerto Rican community is essentially a post-Second World War phenomenon. Like all of America's ethnic communities, except the Indian and Mexican-American communities, the continental Puerto Rican community initially developed through migration.

In 1940, only 70,000 Puerto Ricans lived in the continental U.S. Ten years later the Puerto Rican continental community had quadrupled in size, to more

than 300,000 persons. By 1970, 1.5 million Puerto Ricans lived in the States. According to the 1980 Census, the continental Puerto Rican community exceeded 2 million persons.

Puerto Ricans migrated to the U.S. in search of greater opportunity. Even during the island's robust growth period of the 1950s and 1960s, Puerto Ricans had to cope with limited economic resources and opportunities. The island's average reported unemployment rate for these two decades—13 percent—was two to three times higher than the U.S. average.

The major reason for Puerto Rican migration to the States has been the search for greater economic opportunity. Even during the island's intensive growth period of the 1950s and 1960s, there were not enough jobs for those seeking work.

For many Puerto Ricans, migration to the States was, at best, an ambivalent experience. Discrimination on the basis of language and culture restricted the opportunities available to migrating Puerto Ricans in both the private and public sectors. And while modern Puerto Ricans are the descendents of three races—native Indians, African blacks, and European whites—most Puerto Rican in the States have been perceived as a racial minority and have been subjected to racial prejudice and discrimination.

Employment opportunities for migrating Puerto Ricans were limited, and the jobs available to them were generally the least desirable and of the lowest pay. Thousands of Puerto Rican women toiled in the New York garment industry while Puerto Rican men worked as factory and farm laborers. As a result of economic disadvantage and discrimination, migrant Puerto Ricans were concentrated in the urban barrios of the Northeastern U.S. where substandard housing, inferior education, and a myriad of socioeconomic problems created communities of despair.

Despite discrimination and disadvantage, most Puerto Rican migrants struggled relentlessly to achieve the American dream. And some did. By 1974, 42,000 Puerto Ricans held professional, technical, or managerial jobs in the States; 25,000 Puerto Rican workers earned in excess of $15,000; and a Puerto Rican had been elected to Congress from New York. By 1980, one-fifth of all Puerto Rican families in the continental U.S. had income in excess of $20,000.

Puerto Ricans in the United States and on the Island, 1970–1980: A Demographic Profile

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this demographic profile. is to provide the National Puerto Rican Coalition, Inc. (NPRC) and its members with baseline data on the socio-economic condition of Puerto Ricans in the United States and Puerto Rico. It was developed as part of NPRC's goal to maintain a deliberate inquiry into the economic, social and educational issues affecting the Puerto Rican community. Given this objective, it is anticipated that the profile will assist NPRC and its members determining priorities for their advocacy efforts on behalf of policies which promote the social welfare of the Puerto Rican community.

The profile differs from others in several dimensions. First, it compares Puerto Ricans residing in the United States with those on the Island and both with the general U.S. population. Second, the data, where possible, is supplemented with comparisons drawn from the 1970 U.S. Census and other sources.

However, similar to other demographic profiles, the data here reflects some of the limitations of efforts to collect, analyze and publish data on the Puerto Rican community. A major limitation is that although the U.S. Census collects information by various Hispanic subgroups, it generally aggregates such information into a "Hispanic" category. Another limitation is that adequate data on Hispanics were not collected by the U.S. Census until 1980. As a result, any longitudinal comparison of the socio-economic conditions of the Puerto Rican community is, at best, limited.

In spite of its limitations, the profile does reveal Puerto Ricans as a group still trailing well-behind other Hispanics and the general U.S. population on many measures of social and economic well-being. Although some progress has been made in the last decade, it has not been enough to close the gap. The challenge of building a national community capable of reaping the social and economic benefits of this nation still faces us.

I. GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Growth of Population

According to the 1980 U.S. Census of the Population, there were over 2,004,961 Puerto Ricans residing in the continental United States and another 3.1 million residing in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico (commonly referred to as "the Island"). Puerto Ricans in the United States comprise 13.8 percent of the U.S. Hispanic population, estimated to be 14.6 million. When the population of the Island is included, Puerto Ricans would represent 29 percent of the 1980 U.S. Hispanic community.

A salient characteristic of both the U.S. Puerto Rican community and the Island Puerto Rican community was the rapid rate of growth. The 1980 Census figure for the U.S. Puerto Rican population represents an increase of 41 percent over 1970 when the population was estimated at 1.4 million. For the Island the 1980 figure represents an increase of 17.8 percent over 1970 when the population was established at 2.7 million.

The U.S. Puerto Rican population registered high rates of growth in practically all states where they reside. For example, among states with at least 20,000 Puerto Ricans, Florida, Massachusetts and Texas registered population increases of 200 percent. Pennsylvania and Connecticut saw its Puerto Rican population increase by 100 percent or more. In 1980 New York State had the largest Puerto Rican population—986,389—although the growth of the population was a modest 8 percent.

TABLE 1

Rate of Population Growth: U.S. Puerto Ricans

	1980	1970	Percentage of Change
New York	986,389	916,608	8
New Jersey	243,540	138,896	75
Illinois	129,165	87,896	47
Florida	94,775	28,166	236
California	93,038	50,929	83
Pennsylvania	91,802	44,263	107
Connecticut	88,361	37,603	135
Massachusetts	76,450	23,332	227
Ohio	32,442	20,272	60
Texas	22,938	6,333	262

Source: NPRC assembly of data acquired from the 1980, U.S. Census Supplementary Report, Table 8, p.13.

Geographical Distribution of Puerto Ricans

U.S. Puerto Ricans reside in every state of the nation but are significantly concentrated in the large metropolitan areas of the northeast and northcentral regions. Among all Hispanics, U.S. Puerto Ricans are the most urbanized with 94.5 percent of the population living in metropolitan areas and 74.7 percent residing in the central cities—typically the nation's most populated cities. Similarly, Puerto Ricans on the Island are also highly urbanized with 67 percent of the population residing in urban areas. The metropolitan areas of Caguas, Carolina, Guaynabo, Mayaguez, Ponce, Toa Baja and San Juan accounted for 45 percent of the Island's population.

TABLE 2

Metropolitan Residence of Puerto Ricans and U.S. Hispanic Families

	Hispanic Sub-Groups				
	Total US Population	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Other Hispanics
Percent Distribution					
Metropolitan Areas	66.8	79.3	94.5	96.7	82.2
In Central Cities	26.5	43.4	74.7	39.5	46.0
Outside Central Cities	40.3	35.8	19.8	57.2	36.2
Non Metropolitan Areas	33.2	20.7	5.5	3.3	17.8

Source: NPRC assembly of data acquired from the 1980, U.S. Census Supplementary Report, Table 8, p. 13.

In addition to its rapid growth, the U.S. Puerto Rican population evidenced notable changes in its geographic distribution. For the first time, New York State did not account for a majority of Puerto Ricans residing in the United States. The 1980 U.S. Census revealed that between 1970–1980 the proportion of U.S. Puerto Ricans residing in New York state decreased from 64 percent to 48.8 percent. States with proportionate increases in their share of the U.S. Puerto Rican population are Florida (4.8%), California (4.6%), Illinois (6.6%), Pennsylvania (4.4%), Connecticut (4.4%), Massachusetts (3.7%) and Ohio (1.6%). (See Table 3.)

II. AGE

Puerto Ricans are a youthful population. In 1980 the median age for Puerto Ricans living in the United States was 22.3 years. On the Island the median

TABLE 3

Distribution of Puerto Rican in the U.S. 1970-80

	1970	1980
New York	64.1	48.8
New Jersey	9.7	12.1
Illinois	6.1	6.6
Florida	2.0	4.8
California	3.6	4.6
Pennsylvania	3.1	4.4
Connecticut	2.5	4.4
Massachusetts	1.6	3.7
Ohio	1.4	1.6
Total Percentage	94.1	91.0
Population	1,354,298	1,858,900

Sources: Supplementary Report, U.S. Census 1980. Persons of Spanish Origin by State, Table 8, p. 13.

age for the population was 24.6 years. The median age for both communities was significantly lower than general U.S. population where the median age was 30.1 years.

Between 1970 and 1980 Puerto Ricans in the United States have remained a relatively young group with 75.1 percent of U.S. Puerto Ricans under the age of thirty-five (35), as compared with 51.6 percent for the general U.S. population. Only 2.7 percent of the U.S. Puerto Rican population is sixty-five (65) years or older when compared to 11 percent for the U.S. general population.

In Puerto Rico the population remained relatively young although the median age increased from 21.6 years in 1970 to 24.6 years in 1980. A probable explanation for the increase in the median age in Puerto Rico may be attributed to the large number of U.S. Puerto Ricans who return to the Island to retire and that migration to the United States is primarily undertaken by young adults. (See Table 4.)

Fertility

In addition to being a younger population, U.S. Puerto Ricans had a higher fertility rate than the general U.S. population. The fertility rate of Puerto Rican women on the Island was higher than that of U.S. Puerto Rican women and also that of the general U.S. population. In the age group 15 to 24 years, of women who had ever married, Puerto Ricans in the United States had a fertility rate of .55 or 72 percent higher than the comparable rate for the total population (.32). The same age group on the Island had a fertility rate of 1.3 children per women. (See Table 5.)

TABLE 4

Median Age Puerto Ricans 1970-80

		U.S.		Island	
		1980	1970	1980	1970
Less than	5-9	447,704	68,302	671,962	656,360
	10-19	453,793	124,138	674,519	625,886
	20-29	399,204	211,833	508,783	416,514
	30-39	292,998	172,302	424,507	301,775
	40-49	189,550	116,023	308,296	250,813
	50-59	123,070	65,623	249,945	197,024
	60-69	63,991	33,881	199,336	147,967
	70-79	26,415	13,060	111,977	70,775
	80-Over	8,236	4,916	47,195	38.919
Median Age		22.3	20.7	24.6	21.6
TOTALS		2,004,966	810,087	3,196,520	2,712,033

Source: Puerto Rico, Census 1980, Vol. 1, Table 44, p. 53a-23. U.S. Census 1980, Vol. 1, Table 166, p. 1-163. Puerto Ricans, U.S. Census 1970, Table 2, p. 5, Puerto Rico, Census 1970, Table 16, pp. 53-51, 53-153.

TABLE 5

Puerto Rican Women Fertility Rates 1980

	U.S. Population	Puerto Ricans In U.S.	Island
Total Women ever married	52,878,032	529,211	495,977
Women ever married 15-24	21,063,445	221,356	107,997
Number of children per women	.32	.55	1.3
Women ever married 25-34	18,747,239	186,576	211,218
Number of children per women	1.5	2.0	2.4
Women ever married 35-44	13,067,348	121,279	176,762
Number of children per women	2.6	3.2	3.4

Source: U.S. Summary, Table 166 Age, Fertility Relationship, and Educational Characteristics by Spanish Origin, Type of Spanish Origin and Race 1980, p. 1-163, Puerto Rico Table 43, Selected Social and Economic Characteristics: 1980 and 1970, p. 53a-22.

Although comparable statistics for 1970 are not available, there is evidence to suggest that a decade ago, Puerto Ricans had a higher fertility rate than the

general U.S. population. For example, 1970 U.S. Census data indicated that while 1.6 percent of families in the U.S. general population had 6 or more children the comparable figure for U.S. Puerto Rican families was 5 percent.

III. EDUCATION DATA

Participation Rates

In 1980, of the 1,300,701 potential school age (5–25 years) Puerto Ricans living in the United States, 37 percent participated in public and private schools—nursery through college. On the Island, of 1,855,264 potential school age persons, 33 percent participated at the same levels. In both communities—an overwhelming majority or 91 percent attended publicly supported schools. Participation rates in privately supported education for U.S. Puerto Ricans was one percent (1%) as compared to Island residents which had a 9 percent participation rate. In this regard, the Island's percentage was close to the general U.S. population which had an 11 percent participation rate for private schooling.

Completion Rates and Median Years of Schooling

According to the 1980 U.S. Census, Puerto Rican females living in the United States had a 39.1 percent high school completion rate. The comparable rate for males was 41.3 percent. On the Island the rate of high school completion was 39 percent for females and 40.1 percent for males. Both communities had lower completion rates than those for the general U.S. population where it stood at 65.8 percent for females and 67.3 percent for males.

TABLE 6

Puerto Rican Education Completion Rates: 1980

	Years School Completed	Puerto Ricans in U.S.	Island	General Population
Male	Elementary	149,987	346,640	11,567,578
	High School	192,156	259,750	28,285,187
	College	71,712	138,893	22,563,689
Percent High School Graduates		41.3	40.1	67.3
Female	Elementary	193,468	407,102	12,690,105
	High School	216,737	273,289	37,939,362
	College	66,899	152,008	19,789,766
Percent High School Graduates		39.1	39.0	65.8

Source: U.S. Census 1980, Vol. 1, Table 166, p. 1-16, Puerto Rico Census 1980 Vol. 1, Table 49, pp. 53a-29, 53a-30.

As a result of low completion rates, the average education attainment for U.S. Puerto Ricans and Island Puerto Ricans, as measured by median years of schooling, is low. For example, the median years of schooling for U.S. Puerto Ricans was 10.5 years in 1980 while the comparable figure for Puerto Rico was 9.4 years. Again, both figures are significantly lower than the 12.5 median years of schooling achieved by the general U.S. population.

TABLE 7

Median Years of Schooling

	1976	1980
U.S. Puerto Ricans	10.4	10.5
Island	10.0	9.4
General U.S. Population	13.2	12.5

Sources: U.S. Census, 1980, Vol. Table 166, p. 1-16, Puerto Rico Census, Vol. 1, Table 49, pp 53a-29, 53a-30. 1976 Survey of Income and Education, Average years of schooling completed among white non-Hispanic and Hispanics by Age and Birthplace.

Educational Progress

The youth of the Puerto Rican population, particularly U.S. Puerto Ricans, assures that education will be a vital public policy issue for the years to come. In particular, since the education received by the current generation of school-aged Puerto Ricans will affect the occupational and economic status of Puerto Ricans in the future. The rate of educational progress, though slowly improving, continues to be a serious problem for the Puerto Rican community.

In the 1980 report, *The Condition of Education for Hispanic Americans*, the National Center for Educational Statistics documented that U.S. Puerto Rican and Mexican-American youth are more likely to be enrolled two or more years below grade level than their peers. The high probability of enrollment in grades below the average for their age may be a contributing factor in the high dropout rates experienced by U.S. Puerto Rican youth. It is not surprising therefore, that a disproportionate number of U.S. Puerto Rican youth leave high school without a diploma. (See Table 8.)

The high percentage of U.S. Puerto Ricans who do not complete a high school education means lower attendance rates at institutions of post-secondary education. Thus, while 55 percent of U.S. Puerto Rican youth are academically eligible to attend college, only 25 percent actually enrolled. Moreover, of those U.S. Puerto Rican youth entering college, only 28 percent completed their undergraduate education. (See Figure 1.)

TABLE 8

Percentage of High School Dropouts, By Age and Racial Ethnic Group (Weighted Five-Year Averages, 1974-78)

Group	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Whites	1	2	6	10	13	16	18	27	18	18	18	18
Blacks	1	2	6	12	20	27	27	30	31	32	29	28
Mexican Americans	2	6	26	23	31	41	43	45	50	51	56	53
Puerto Ricans	2	4	12	19	36	42	52	49	54	62	41	56

Note: A dropout was defined as any person who, at the time of the survey, was not a high school graduate and was not enrolled in school.

Source: *Minorities in American Higher Education*. Alexander Astin, Jossey Bass 1982.

A bright spot in the education of Puerto Ricans is the remarkable progress made by Puerto Rico in providing educational opportunities. Over the years the government of Puerto Rico has made a major financial commitment to public education. In recent years, about one fourth of the government budget has been spent on elementary and secondary education. During the fiscal year 1982, the Puerto Rico Department of Education had a budget of $720.3 million which was by far the largest of any government agency in Puerto Rico.

Along with the expansion of elementary and secondary education Puerto Rico has seen a virtual explosion in higher education. As the 1980 report on *The Condition of Education for Hispanic Americans* indicates, Puerto Rico plays a major role in the higher education of Hispanic citizens in the United States. For example, in 1960 only 24,529 students were enrolled in Puerto Rico's institutions of higher education. In contrast, by 1980, enrollment at the university level had increased to 130,352 students. Thus, by 1980 enrollment in Puerto Rico's institutions of higher education accounted for 21.6 percent of all Hispanic undergraduates in the United States (including the U.S. territories and Puerto Rico).

IV. INCOME OF PUERTO RICAN FAMILIES

A significant characteristic of both the U.S. Puerto Rican and Island Puerto Rican population is their low income status. According to the 1980 Census, U.S. Puerto Rican families had the lowest median income of any ethnic group. The 1980 reported median family income of $10,734 for U.S. Puerto Rican families represented only 54 percent of the median family income of $19,917 for the general U.S. population. Puerto Rican families in the Island fared even worse with a reported median income of $5,923 or 29 percent of that of the U.S. general population. (See Table 9.)

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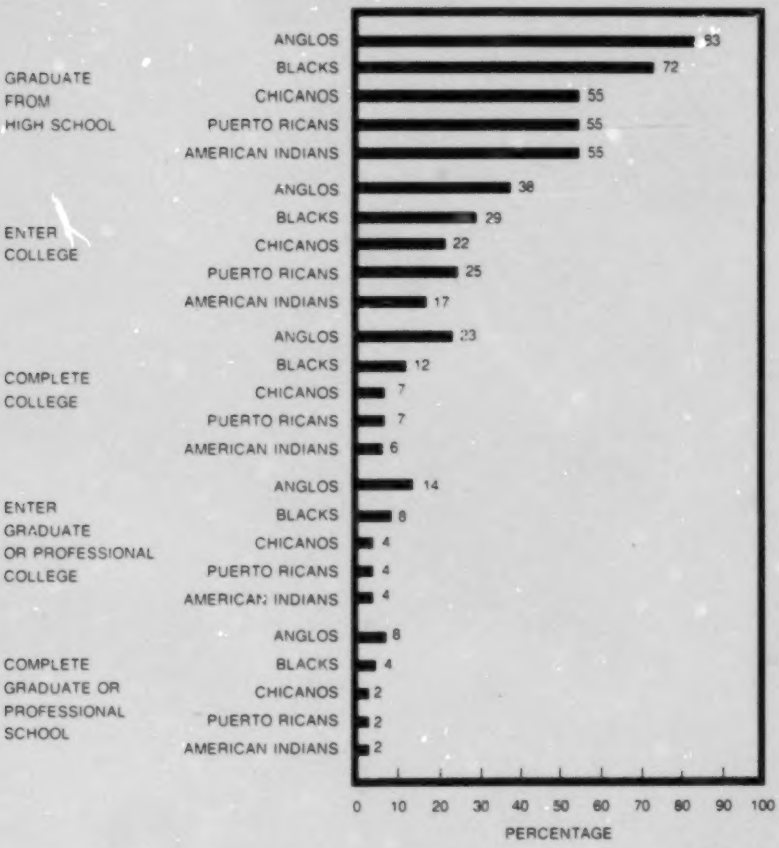
Figure 1

The Educational Pipeline for Minorities



Source: Alexander Autin. Minorities in American Higher Education. Jossey-Bass. 1982 (San Francisco, CA).

A further analysis of income statistics reveal that U.S. Puerto Ricans exhibited a high proportion of families with incomes under $5,000. Fully 23.5 percent of U.S. Puerto Rican families earned less than $5,000 while 50.5 percent reported family incomes of less than $10,000. Only 13.3 percent of U.S. Puerto Rican families had income of $25,000 or more. (See Table 10.)

TABLE 9

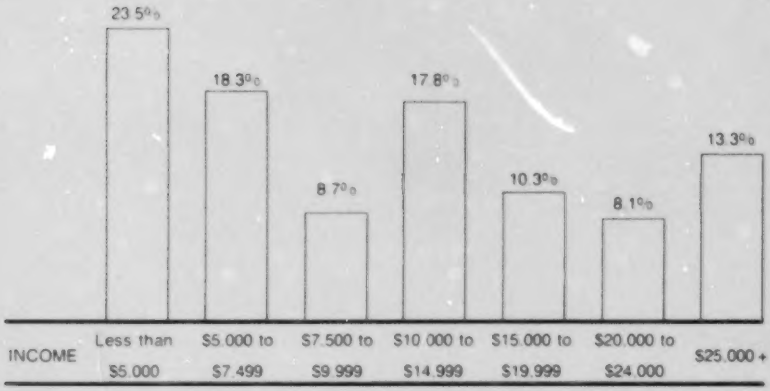
Median & Mean Income by Household & Families, 1980

	General Population Total Numbers	Puerto Rican U.S. Total Numbers	Island Total Numbers
Household	80,467,427	597,460	871,365
Median	$16,841	$10,075	$5,348
Mean	$20,306	$12,774	$7,738
Families	59,190,133	479,772	757,645
Median	$19,917	$10,734	$5,923
Mean	$23,092	$13,411	$8,271
Persons per Family	3.62	3.82	4.28

Source: U.S. Summary, Table 170. Labor Force Status in 1979 and Income Characteristics in 1979 by Spanish Origin, Type of Spanish Origin and Race: 1980, p. 167, P.R. Summary, Table 54. Income Characteristics in 1979: 1980, p. 53a-55.

TABLE 10

U.S. Income Distribution of Puerto Ricans: 1980



Source: NPRC assembly of data acquired from the 1980 U.S. Census Supplementary Report.

Poverty Level

Poverty remains as one of the most pervasive problems affecting Puerto Ricans in the United States and Puerto Rico.

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In 1970 the U.S. Census reported that almost 30 percent of all U.S. Puerto Rican families were living below the poverty level established by the federal government. The comparable figure for white families was approximately nine percent (9%). Island Puerto Rican families fared even worse with an incidence of poverty approaching 65 percent in 1970.

TABLE 11

Poverty Level: 1970, Puerto Ricans in the U.S. and the Island

	Puerto Rico	U.S. Puerto Ricans
Total Families Below	1,656,671	403,177
Poverty Level	64.3%	29.6%
Average Family Size	4.23	4.15
Mean Family Income	$ 4,411	$ 6,924

Source: Puerto Rico, 1970 Census, Tables 167 and 162, pp. 53-1182 and 53-1268, Table 14, pp. 53-47. Puerto Ricans in the U.S., 1970 Census, Table 8 and 9, pp. 84 and 89.

Although it is difficult to compare poverty statistics from one decade to another—the U.S. Census Bureau's poverty threshold varies by family size and age of householder and is adjusted annually for inflation—it appears that Puerto Ricans have made little, if any, progress in overcoming the high incidence of poverty. Recent statistics from the federal government indicate that as of 1980 approximately 34.9 percent of U.S. Puerto Rican families were living below the poverty level. Puerto Rico fared better where the incidence of poverty among families actually decreased by 4 percent from 1970.

TABLE 12

Poverty Level: 1980 Census

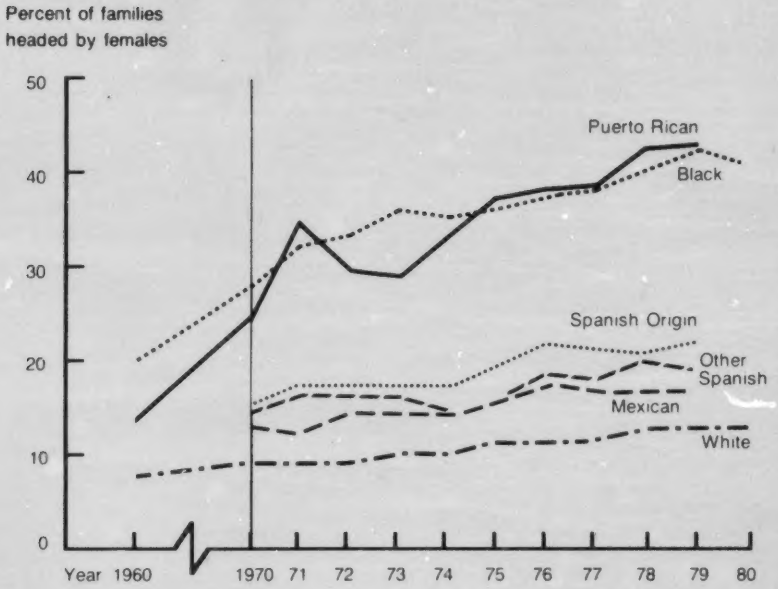
	General Population	Puerto Ricans U.S.	Island
Percent below Poverty Level	9.6%	34.9%	58%
Female Households No Husband Present	2,484,246	111,471	101,664
Below Poverty Level	(44%)	(66%)	(23%)

Source: P.R. Summary. Table 55, Poverty Status in 1979 of Families and Persons: 1980, p. 53a-36 and Table 54, Income Characteristics in 1979: 1980, p. 53a-35. U.S. Summary, Table 170, Labor Force Status in 1979 and Income Characteristics in 1979 by Spanish Origin, Type of Spanish Origin, and Race: 1980, p. 1-167 and Table 171, Poverty Status in 1979 of Families and Persons by Spanish Origin, Type of Spanish Origin and Race: 1980, p. 1-168.

A contributing factor for the high incidence of poverty among U.S. Puerto Ricans is the high proportion of households headed by females. As indicated in Table 12, in 1980 fully 66 percent of all U.S. Puerto Rican poverty households were headed by females. More disturbing, the proportion of all U.S. Puerto Rican families headed by a female has been on the increase from 24 percent in 1970 to 40 percent in 1980.

Figure 2

Percent of Female-headed Families by Race and Type of Spanish Origin: 1960 - 80



Source: Massey, The Demographic and Economic Position, in NCEP Increasing the Earnings of Disadvantaged Women, 1982.

V. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS

Puerto Ricans living in the United States are primarily concentrated in four occupational categories: clerical and kindred; craft and kindred; operatives; and,

service workers. Overall, when compared to the general U.S. population, Puerto Ricans in the United States are less concentrated in white collar occupations and more disproportionately concentrated in blue collar and service industries. For example, in comparison to all male workers, U.S. Puerto Ricans were half as likely to be represented in the executive and managerial occupations. U.S. Puerto Rican women, in comparison to men, were overrepresented in the lower skilled occupational categories.

TABLE 13

Occupations of Puerto Ricans and All Workers, by Sex 1981

Occupation	All Workers		U.S. Puerto Rican	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Professional/ Technical	15.9	17.0	8.5	11.6
Managers Administrators	14.6	7.4	6.9	5.5
Sales	6.1	6.8	2.6	3.0
Clerical	6.3	34.7	13.1	36.4
Craft and kindred workers	20.7	1.9	15.4	2.5
Operatives Except Transport	11.1	9.7	20.6	25.3
Transport Equipment Operatives	5.5	0.7	6.2	0.5
Nonfarm Laborers	7.1	1.3	8.5	0.5
Service Workers	8.9	19.4	17.6	13.1
Farm Workers	3.9	1.1	0.3	0.5

Source: Roth "Hispanics in the U.S. Labor Force" Tables 5 and 6.

Data on the occupational status of Puerto Ricans on the Island, while it exists, does not allow for meaningful comparisons. In fact, while comparable data on labor market status is collected for the Island it is not included in the national reporting system. This asymmetry in reporting labor data creates problem for understanding the position of all Puerto Ricans. Nevertheless, the available data suggest that four categories account for most of the occupational distribution: Managerial and professional, 20.3 percent; technical and support, 27.2 percent; service occupations, 14.6 percent; and, operators and related occupations, 22 percent. Based on the above information, it would appear that Puerto Rico has succeeded in developing a viable managerial and technical class.

TABLE 14

Occupations of Puerto Ricans in the Island, 1980

Puerto Rico 1980: Occupations	1970		1980	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Employed persons 16 years and over	**634,961**	**100.0**	**733,922**	**100.00**
Managerial professional	**98,378**	**15.5**	**149,010**	**20.3**
Executive administrative/managerial	39,034	6.1	61,542	8.4
Professional specialty	59,344	9.3	87,468	11.9
Technical sales, and administrative support	**147,223**	**23.2**	**199,268**	**27.2**
Technicians and related support	9,379	1.5	15,202	2.1
Sales	66,333	10.4	73,839	10.1
Administrative support including clerical	71,511	11.3	110,227	15.0
Service	**80,247**	**12.6**	**106,986**	**14.6**
Private household	10,342	1.6	4,032	0.5
Protective service	15,169	2.4	23,395	3.2
Service occupations, except protective and household	54,736	8.6	79,559	10.8
Foraging, forestry/fishing	**50,727**	**8.0**	**25,476**	**3.5**
Precision, production, craft & repair	**97,783**	**15.4**	**92,021**	**12.5**
Operators, fabricators and laborers	**160,603**	**25.3**	**161,161**	**22.0**
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	74,707	11.8	79,149	10.8
Transportation and material moving	39,969	6.3	37,560	5.1
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	45,927	7.2	44,452	6.1

Source: Puerto Rico, Census 1980, Table 43, pp. 53a-22.

Labor Force Participation

In 1980 working age Puerto Ricans (16 years and older) living in the United States exhibited a labor force participation rate of 54.9 percent for males and 40.1 percent for females. Both rates were significantly lower than the comparable rate for the U.S. general population of 63.4 percent for males and 49.3 percent for females.

On the Island men exhibited a 54.4 percent rate of labor force participation while the comparable rate for females was 29.1 percent. Again the rates of labor force participation for both groups was lower than the comparable rates for the general U.S. population.

According to the National Commission for Employment Policy, the U.S. Puerto Rican labor force participation rate for men is low and declining. For example, in 1974, 75 percent of U.S. Puerto Rican men were in the work force;

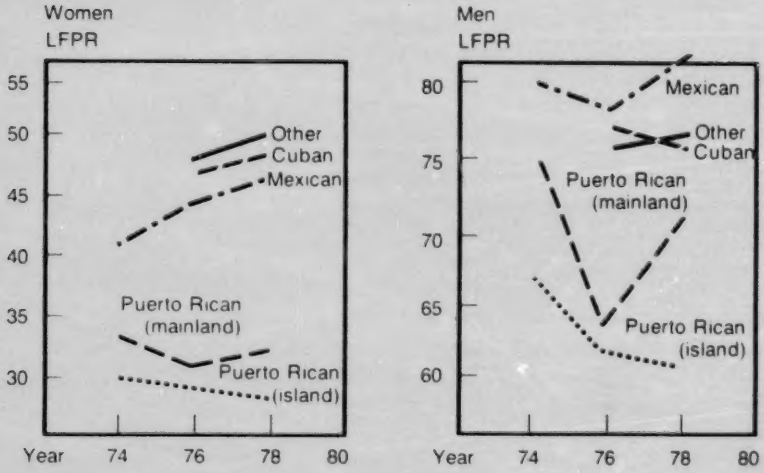
this proportion declined to 66 percent during the 1975–76 recession. After the recession, their participation rate rose, but not to its 1974 level. This pattern of gradual decline paralleled that found among Black men.

Puerto Rican men on the Island have experienced similar decline in labor force participation. While about two-thirds were in the work force in 1974, by 1978 it had dropped to 60 percent. The 1980 labor participation rate of 54.4 percent represents a decline of approximately 10 percent.

Similarly, Puerto Rican women in he United States have generally had low and declining labor force participation rates. For example, in 1960 U.S. Puerto Rican women had a labor force participation rate which approximated the average for all women in the United States. With the exception of a slight increase during the 1976–1978 period they have stabilized at a lower level than the average for all women workers. In the Island the labor force participation rate for women has declined since 1974 and has stabilized at slightly above half of the rate for adult women in the general U.S. population.

Figure 3

Labor Force Participation Rates



Source: NCEP, Hispanics and Jobs: Barriers to Progress (1982).

Unemployment

The unemployment rate for Puerto Ricans in the United States and Puerto Rico are significantly higher than those of other Hispanic groups and the U.S. general population.

According to 1980 data, the average unemployment rate for Puerto Ricans in the United States was 11.7 percent for men and 12.7 percent for women. On the Island the average rate of unemployment for persons 16 years and older was 15.2 percent with that of female workers at 16.5 percent. At the time both communities experienced unemployment rates higher than the average for the U.S. general population then estimated at 9.1 percent.

More recent data on unemployment among U.S. Puerto Ricans indicates a worsening condition. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in January 1984 average unemployment for U.S. Puerto Ricans stood at 15.9 percent—a rate higher than all other Hispanic groups. The average unemployment rate for all workers was 9.6 percent. With U.S. Puerto Ricans highly concentrated in low-skilled and low-paying occupations, it appears that high unemployment among U.S. Puerto Ricans will continue to be a major public policy issue in the future.

VI. MIGRATION

One of the most striking characteristics of the Puerto Rican group is its migration pattern. Since 1970 there has been a net migration from Puerto Rico into the U.S. of 145,411 persons. During fiscal year 1982–83 the out-migration figure was estimated to be the highest figure since 1957.

Out-migration and in-migration have been indicators of employment opportunities on the island and in the U.S. Analysts of the Puerto Rican migration phenomenon estimate that one-third of the islanders have left Puerto Rico in search of better economic opportunities in the U.S.

The Puerto Rican Planning Board is the primary source of migration data. The Puerto Rican migration phenomenon remains as one of the most significant factors in the life of this community and in its changing structure. (See Table 15.)

VII. SUMMARY

Puerto Ricans represent a sizeable and growing part of the Hispanic population in the United States. The 1980 Census estimated that there are over 2 million persons of Puerto Rican origin in the United States and another 3.2 million in the island of Puerto Rico. Together they represent a community of 5.2 million citizens who share a common cultural and historical heritage.

TABLE 15

Puerto Rico Net Migration
Fiscal 1970-1983

Year	Inbound Passengers	Outbound Passengers	Balance*
1970-71	2,088,544	2,091,069	– 2,525
1971-72	2,329,872	2,306,224	23,648
1972-73	2,470,076	2,507,145	–37,069
1973-74	2,497,170	2,522,141	–24,971
1974-75	2,329,452	2,334,882	– 5,430
1975-76	2,317,034	2,280,833	36,201
1976-77	2,342,174	2,346,784	– 4,610
1977-78	2,538,671	2,558,953	–20,282
1978-79	2,853,324	2,859,402	– 6,078
1979-80	2,741,798	2,757,899	–16,101
1980-81	2,635,430	2,645,890	–10,460
1981-82	2,660,153	2,693,450	–33,297
1982-83	2,575,967	2,620,400	–44,433

Source: Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Planning Board.
***A negative balance indicates an outflow of people from the Island.**

While Puerto Ricans have made some progress in their socioeconomic conditions, it is apparent that this progress has not been sufficient to achieve parity with the general U.S. population. In fact, on many indicators of social standing, Puerto Ricans lag significantly behind other Hispanic sub-groups. The diversity of problems faced by the Puerto Rican community is a major challenge to its leadership during the balance of this decade.

In spite of the problems there is cause for optimism. The Puerto Rican community is relatively young. The fact that a majority of the community is of school age may account for their weak economic position. Clearly, the next generation of Puerto Ricans will be better educated and that should improve their socioeconomic standing.

Another reason for optimism is the growth of the U.S. Puerto Rican community could translate into greater political empowerment. However, mobilizing the growth of the Puerto Rican community into political empowerment might remain elusive unless the collective efforts of the community are put into action to bring it about.

VIII. GLOSSARY OF CENSUS TERMS

Age:

The data on age represent the difference between date of birth and April 1, 1980.

Earnings:

Is defined as the algebraic sum of wage or salary income and net income from farm and nonfarm self-employment.

Family:

A family consists of a householder and one or more other persons living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. All persons in a household who are related to the householder are regarded as members of his or her family. A "married-couple family" is a family in which the householder and spouse are enumerated as members of the same household. Not all households contain families, because a household may be composed of a group of unrelated persons or one person living alone. The measure "persons per family" is obtained by dividing the number of persons in families by the total number of families (or family householders).

Householder:

One person in each household is designated as the "householder". In most cases, this is the person, or one of the persons, in whose name the home is owned or rented. If there is no such person in the household, any adult household member could be designated as the "householder". Two types of householders are distinguished a family householder and a nonfamily householder. A family householder is a householder living with one or more persons related to him or her by birth, marriage, or adoption. The householder and all persons in the household related to him or her are family members. A nonfamily householder is a householder living alone or with nonrelatives only.

Income of Families and Unrelated Individuals:

The compilation of statistics on family income, the incomes of all members 15 years old and over in each family are summed and treated as a single amount.

Income of Households:

Household income includes the income of the householder and all other persons 15 years old and over in the household, whether related to the householder or not. Since many households consist of only one person, average household income is usually less than average family income.

Labor Force:

The labor force includes all persons classified in the civilian labor force plus

members of the Armed Forces (persons on active duty with the United States Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard).

Mean Income:

The mean income is the amount obtained by dividing the total income of a particular statistical universe by the number of units in that universe. Thus, mean household income is obtained by dividing total household income by the total number of households. For the various types of income the means are based on households having those types of income.

Median Income:

The median income is the amount which divides the distribution into two equal groups, one having incomes above the median and the other having incomes below the median. For households, families and unrelated individuals the median income is based on the distribution of the total number of units including those with no income. The median for persons is based on persons with income. The median income values for all households, families, and unrelated individuals are computed on the basis of more detailed income intervals than shown in this report.

Median School Years Completed:

The median number of school years completed was computed on the basis of intervals for years under 8 and a continuous series of number for 8 years of school completed and above (e.g., completion of the 1st year of high school was treated as completion of the 9th year, completion of the 1st year of college, as completion of the 13th year, etc.). Persons completing a given school year were assumed to be distributed evenly within the interval from .0 to .9 of the year.

Public Assistance Income:

Includes (1) supplementary security income payments made by Federal or State welfare agencies to low income persons who are aged (65 years old or over, blind, or disabled; (2) aid to families with dependent children, and (3) general assistance.

Public, Church-Related, or Other Private School:

Persons who were enrolled in school were also classified as attending a public, church-related, or other private school. In general, a "public" school is de-

fined as any school which is controlled and supported primarily by a local, State or Federal Government agency. A "church-related" school is defined here as a private school which is controlled or supported primarily by a religious organization. An "other private" school is defined as a school controlled or supported primarily by private groups other than religious organizations.

School Enrollment:

Persons are classified as enrolled in school if they reported attending a "regular" school or college at any time between February 1, 1980, and the time of enumeration. Regular schooling is defined as pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, elementary school, and schooling which leads to a high school diploma or college degree. Schooling in trade or business schools, company training, or schooling obtained through a tutor was to be reported only if the course credits obtained were regarded as transferable to a regular elementary school, high school, or college.

Total Income:

Is the algebraic sum of the amounts reported separately for wage or salary income; nonfarm net self-employment income; interest, dividend, net royalty or rental income; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; public assistance or welfare income; and all other income.

Unemployment:

Persons are classified as unemployed if they were civilians 16 years old and over and (a) were neither "at work" nor "with a job but not at work" during the reference week, (b) were looking for work during the last 4 weeks, and (c) were available to accept a job. Examples of job-seeking activities are: (1) registering at a public or private employment office, (2) meeting with prospective employers, (3) investigating possibilities for starting a professional practice or opening a business, (4) placing or answering advertisements, (5) writing letter of application, and (6) being on a union or professional register.

Also included as unemployed are persons who did not work at all during the reference week and were waiting to be called back to a job from which they had been laid off.

Years of School Completed:

The number of highest grade of school completed represents the combination of (a) persons who reported the indicated grade as the highest grade attended

and that they had finished it, (b) those who had attended the next higher grade, but had not finished it, and (c) those still attending the next higher grade. Persons who hae not completed the first year of elementary school are classified as having no years of school completed. "Percent high school graduates" includes persons who completed four years of high school by graduation or an equivalency test and persons who reported that they had attended some level of college.

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THE PUERTO RICAN FAMILY

by Dr. Ramona Salgado

Introduction

The Puerto Rican family has been exposed to an accelerated process of social change including a migratory process that has divided the population; has expanded the geographical boundaries beyond the island's physical parameters; and has expanded its scope of human endeavors, particularly for those who emigrate to seek better economic opportunities. Migration has had a short range, as well as a long range impact on the life and culture of past, present and presumably future generations. The migratory experience has specific effects on the Puerto Rican family system, both in the U.S. and on the island. However, before we look at the Puerto Rican family, it seems appropriate to consider some universal factors and changing concepts about the human family.

Since this world continues to evolve within the context of high technology at such a rapid pace, anyone who attempts to analyze the family today must look beyond culture, in order to establish its proper perspective in relation to survival.

Throughout history, the family has been the basic institution proving both essential to the existence of mankind and to the foundation of social systems. Regardless of particular sociocultural considerations, in every society adults are responsible for the nurturing and the upbringing of their children. This process is reproduced despite the differences in groupings and settings. The process of socialization of the individual starts in the family, and parents are the "primary educators".[1] Since families constitute society, the resulting family experience is reflected in society. In this context, one can venture to state that the investment in the family and the commitment to its survival may be the best contribution to the continuity and growth of society.

There seems to be an atmosphere of uncertainty about the future and even the value of the family system in the United States. Questions are being raised, such as:

- Is the family institution breaking down?
- Are traditional values, roles and customs being replaced by permissiveness and lack of direction?

• Is the traditional family so threatened that it is destined to disappear?

Attempts to deal with issues related to the status of the family are culminating in various theories and efforts to evaluate the family system. The family is not a static social group. It is a living system that changes from one generation to another, within the continuity of the life cycle. Claude Levi-Strauss describes the family in the following manner: "It exists within a dynamic process of tension and opposition with an equilibrium point extremely difficult to find, its exact position being submitted to endless variations from time to time and from society to society. Society belongs to the realm of culture, while the family is the emanation of the social level, of those natural requirements without which there could be no society and, indeed, no mankind".[2]

Part of the present diversity of opinions related to the apparently imminent collapse of the family system seems to be based on nostalgic comparisons of its present status with the traditional family experience. There is a tendency among generations to reminisce about better times and a better quality of life without full realization of the present. This contributes to conflict between parents and children and to the creation of the generation gap.

Defining the family today is a difficult task. Definitions need to be flexible and to take into consideration that families vary from one society to another, from one stage of the life cycle to another, and that significant social changes are taking place, which have direct effects on the family system. As stated by Dr. Hope Leichter: "It is commonly recognized today that the institution termed *the family* has a variety of forms in different societies. The nuclear family of husband, wife and children may not be coterminous with household units; life cycle changes in the household unit vary from one society to another, and the range of social relationships that are defined on the basis of kinship also varies. In this society, the possibility of widespread social change and substantial variations in family forms is very much with us as reflected in enormous current concern with the family."[3]

Changes which have impact and effect on the structure and function of the family are correlated not only to social changes but also to changes in demographic patterns. These include an increase in the older population, an increased number of women in the labor force, changes in sex roles and an increased divorce rate. Moreover, "a number of experimental forms of living are emerging, including adoption by unmarried parents".[4] Among these are homosexual individuals and couples who also adopt children, thus increasing the variety of family units.

Changes in the structure and functions of the Puerto Rican family system have been observed over time. The following typology of prevailing Puerto Rican family types has emerged: (1) nuclear family; (2) the traditional extended family; (3) the modified extended family, that is, a nuclear family but one which enjoys close relationship and extended family support; (4) the female headed in which the female has had a series of partners; (5) the female dominant in

which the maternal relatives have an important role in the socialization of the children and in which the father's role is reduced; (6) the sub-extended family in which the family unit has a nuclear family composition, but in which the extended family has a major psychological and social role.[5]

Nieves Falcon describes the Puerto Rican family as one with close emotional and psychological ties in which the child becomes well-acquainted with the hierarchy of power and the role expectations for each family member. Within family life values, norms, patterns of behavior and limitations are determined and reinforced by the particular socio-cultural setting. Thus a child is provided with a clear notion of his expected relationship not only to the family unit but also to the immediate community and society at large.[6]

As a result of migration, families often experience changes that are both threatening to its survival and to the proper exercise of its function, of nurturing and socialization of its children. It can be said then that migration renders the family system vulnerable and fragile due to increased environmental stress.

Moreover, lower socio-economic groups, in general, experience more stressful conditions, than their more affluent counterparts and for the economically disadvantaged migrant Puerto Rican family, this stress is multiplied when the new life experience also includes: "The need to learn a new language; the impact of bilingualism upon information processing, memory, cognitive abilities, personality characteristics and world view; prejudice and discrimination; adaptation to the impersonal terms of a bureacratized society; demands of an agitated daily cycle of life rooted in the character of the urban metropolis; and the anxious tribulations of daily interaction of persons outside the ethnic group."[7]

In addition, these migrant families experience disappointments and contradictions in the life situations encountered. Lack of viable support systems or proper substitutes increase the vulnerability of the family system in the face of this stressful environment. For the Puerto Rican family, the process of survival requires the development of strategies that facilitate the means of existing between two cultures in which values are not only different but many times are in contradiction.

Awareness of the dynamics and intricacies of the poor migrant experience is essential in attempting to understand the needs, the potential and the rights of the migrant family. This requires a flexible definition of family structure, family ties, kinship and the supportive systems. The migrant family faces a set of circumstances that deserve careful evaluation, by those concerned with its future.

Present Realities and Future Development

It is a well-known fact that upon its discovery in 1493, Puerto Rico was settled by Spaniards. The "Tainos" (the original inhabitants of the island) integrated

with the settlers. African slaves were later introduced as part of the labor force. The roots of the Puerto Rican society stem from these three major components and the family originates from this racial and cultural blend.

In 1898, when Puerto Rico became a possession of the United States, the island had been under Spain's dominance for over 400 years. During these four centuries the island population underwent a process that generated a society with distinct cultural characteristics such as: male dominance, division of labor and family roles, sex roles, a virginity cult, racial tolerance and such concepts as respect and dignity. A sense of national identity was also developed, and was so well established that there had been organized movements to obtain the autonomy of the island from Spain. Being Puerto Rican has been a deeply ingrained reality closely linked with that of being an individual, of existing within a specific cultural setting and of living within a particular territory recognized as the birth place of present and preceeding generations.

The belief system, the psychological make-up, the experience of being, feeling and thinking, and the values of individuals, families and the society were shaped during these 400 years of cultural development. With the transition from Spain to United States rule, the Puerto Rican family unit encountered a very different culture, and this process had very definite effects on individual and cultural identity. Although English became the mandatory language in the educational system up until 1948, the Spanish language, nevertheless, has prevailed as the major expression of the culture.

In order for a child to develop, the family, as the first educational institution, transmits the cultural heritage through a body of knowledge, values and patterns of social behavior. This complex task requires cooperation, sharing knowledge and creative approaches from many sources (home, school, community, peers, etc.). In this transformation, language is the key to total expression. It is the gift of language that makes thoughts, feelings and actions intelligible. When people migrate they bring their cultural heritage including their native language.

The Puerto Rican population has special needs in relation to language. The first generation is predominantly Spanish-speaking while the second and third generations are more likely to be English dominant. Although a degree of assimilation and acculturation are inevitable when living and surviving in a different society, cultural pluralism is not impossible and in fact is essential for the maintenance and survival of the migrant culture.

Language becomes the fulcrum for this cultural survival, as language and culture are intimately imbedded and these are crucial aspects in the development of an identity. This identity is crucial to the individual, his/her life, the family unit and the community. In addition, communication within a social context is more complete and meaningful when the communication is linguistically, and culturally congruent.

Although divided, the Puerto Rican population in the U.S. and on the island are separated by a mere three hour flight, and the flow of exchange and communication is constant. Yet there are language barriers between the communities on the mainland and the island. These language barriers are evident within extended families and among the different generations. Moreover, there exist barriers to communication within individual families. Due to these conditions, there exist changes in patterns of communication within families, within communities and within the said systems. Such changes ultimately have serious implications for providers and recipients of family-related services.

The Family in Puerto Rico

The family in Puerto Rico is being observed and scrutinized by serious scholars, social scientists and practitioners in various fields. There seems to be a general consensus that the family is dealing with so much stress, and that the strength to deal with the situation is decreasing, thereby, causing a crisis. In fact, the word "familia" and what is happening in the family have become part of the slogans of political campaigns.

Torres Zayas in *Holocaust, Today's Puerto Rican Family*, indicates the most noticeable social changes which have had effects on the family. Among those mentioned are the internal migration from rural zones to urban areas, an increase in urban housing developments, improvements in transportation and communication, technological advancements, industrialization, opening up more schools, shopping centers and fast food restaurants. Also mentioned are increased employment opportunities, better salaries, more women participating in the labor force and new services for the education and care of younger children. Other changes, such as, the establishment of fixed working hours by commerce and industry, which are not flexible to accommodate personal needs, new credit facilities that encourage the role of the family as consumer, also have had demonstrable effects on family life.

In Puerto Rico, the divorce rate has increased and it is very easy to obtain a divorce by mutual consent. In 1975, there were 32,731 marriages performed and there were 12,895 divorces. Almost 40 out of each hundred marriages ended in divorce. "The United Nations' 1977 Demographic Yearbook indicated that Puerto Rico showed one of the highest divorce rates in the world, followed by the United States".[8] Although the divorce rate is high, the incidence of remarriage has also increased and the female-headed household in the younger age groups (14 years and older) has decreased. This situation adds variety to the family structure and composition as children from different unions become related by marriage. The high incidence of divorce does not mean, however, that marriage is in decadence. The structure and function of families change as a result of a series of unions and marriages.

Some studies about women in Puerto Rico's society indicate that, in general, women (especially those who have obtained a higher education) are more aware of their rights, their intellectual capacity and the importance of participating in all phases of society, including politics. The more conscientious woman of today, regardless of social class, is less willing to tolerate extreme subordination and abuse. As women become more assertive, their scope of activity broadens, their identities as persons change and the demands and expectations in their various roles are different. This calls for a reevaluation of traditional roles within the family and the implications in the family interaction, relationships, child rearing practices and responsibilities. Helen Icken Safa finds that as women become more independent, marital stability seems to decrease. In cases where the head of the family is a woman, the family is more likely to become dependent on public assistance and the chances for upward mobility are reduced. One significant observation made was that even when the household is headed by a female, the role and influence of the father may still be intact. Yet even in the maritally stable families, the female has most of the household maintenance, child rearing, and family social responsibilities, while the male holds the authority and has as his main concern the family income.[9]

Icken Safa and Maldonado Denis both emphasize the positive aspects and the strengths of family life. Frequently, research focuses more on the pathology and dysfunction of families rather than its strengths, thereby producing a skewed and incomplete picture. The contribution of women to the family's survival and stability, and the resulting stress related to such a complex role require further exploration and documentation.

Due to social changes, functions that were once performed by the family are now delegated to other institutions. This has caused changes and conflict within the family unit and society. The existence of early childhood schools, hospitals and nursing homes attest to this fact. It seems that neither the family nor the social institutions were prepared for an accelerated social change that shatters the strengths of the family and strains the capacity of their organizations resources.

The family had been considered mostly a passive force within society because traditionally it had been regarded as a self-sufficient unit. At present, it is evident that changes within the social structure have a direct effect on the family structure but since the effects are interactive, the dynamics of change for both run parallel. Today, rather than considering the family in a traditional passive role, it should be regarded as a basic agent of change.

These transitions within the family and society are not unique to the island's population. The Puerto Rican migrant population has had to adjust, in addition, to the component of living, developing and adjusting within the framework of two cultures.

There is a constant flow of migration and reverse migration between the

mainland and the island. When the economic conditions of the island are poor the migration flow increases and when they improve, the migration flow declines. As a result of the Great Depression and the resulting government initiatives epitomized by "Operation Bootstrap", the largest migration of Puerto Ricans to date began.

After 1940, the massive migration of Puerto Ricans to the United States was due mostly to economic conditions existing on the island, such as high unemployment, low salaries, etc. In general, the intention of the migrant of that period was to work, to save some money and to return to the island and use the savings to improve the housing and living conditions of his/her family. The permanence of the first generation on the U.S. was a result of the cyclic pattern of unemployment and the worsening of economic conditions in Puerto Rico. At the beginning of this migration period, people with low level skills as in previous migrations, were absorbed into the existing job market, which then had an abundance of unskilled work on farms, in industry and in factories. Technological advancement over the years not only decreased the pool of existing low skilled positions, but also necessitated increased education and training even for entry level jobs and especially for upward mobility. Thus for many, the doors of opportunity were firmly closed. Some attempted to return to the island. By the time of their return their families had changed. Many family members could not adapt again to Puerto Rico; many opted to stay at home, in the U.S.

There is still a high rate of unemployment in Puerto Rico and many of the migrant families who returned to Puerto Rico often choose to migrate to the mainland once again as the only alternative to their displacement. The returned migrant faced similar problems to those encountered during the original migration to the mainland, mainly, social isolation, unemployment, a language barrier, poor housing, prejudices and misconceptions and a high cost of living. For a few, this pattern is often repeated. Thus, the family has to constantly adjust and readjust to frequent changes between two cultures. This factor is the cause of much stress and anxiety which many times exceeds the demands on family resources and fortitude. The detrimental effects of a weakened family structure have been evident to some researchers and practitioners. Studies by Canino & Rogler, Eagon, Garrison, Kellerman, indicate that there seems to exist a correlation between the migration experience and the resulting interruption and discontinuation from the original culture with the process of adaptation to the new environment which seems to place the migrant family at higher risk to develop mental health problems.[10]

After close to 44 years of the massive migration, the conditions of the Puerto Rican community in the United States is far from the ideal dream of advancement in an affluent society. A great majority of Puerto Ricans still hold the lower level, lower paid jobs, have the highest unemployment rate, the highest number of dependents and their living conditions are generally the worst. In a society where education is considered the ideal vehicle for social mobility, this com-

munity is at a great disadvantage because it has the lowest educational rate of the adult population in the United States, the lowest rate of persons with college degrees, the highest rate of school drop-outs and the highest rate of persons who begin college and do not finish their studies.

According to the 1980 Census report, there are 2,004,961 Puerto Ricans in the United States. These comprise a total of 479,722 families. Out of these, 39.9% are headed by females and 60.5% by males. On the economic side, 65.1% are above the poverty level while 34.9% are below the poverty level. The poverty rates for Puerto Ricans has been constantly higher than that of the general population.

In New York City where there is the largest concentration of Puerto Ricans, the 1980 Census report indicates that the average family income is lower than for any other Hispanic group ($13,712 for married couples and $5,111 for the single, female head of household). The participation of males 16 years and over in the labor force is 65.9 while that of females is only 33.8. Under these conditions, the only possible direction to take is to search for viable alternatives in order to get out of the entanglement of the cycle of poverty.

Although the migratory process is largely associated with the poor migrants that worked on farms and with the urban poor, upper class as well as middle class and professional persons have also migrated and settled on the mainland whether temporarily or permanently. However, in the reality of the process, the poorest of the poor are the ones that remain visible because they become trapped in the type of poverty in which the dream of upward mobility becomes a nightmare. At this point, life for these families becomes a mere day-to-day existence, and the struggle for survival becomes an endurance test for the human spirit.

From the figures previously discussed, it is not possible to generalize the Puerto Rican migration as either a total success or a total failure. Evidently, some people have moved upward and indeed a middle class is visible wherever there is a large concentration of Puerto Ricans. Yet, less is known of this upwardly mobile segment of our population. Most research studies have dealt with those families caught in the prevailing poverty. Traditional research has explored and confirmed stereotyped ideas and perceptions about the migrants and the migratory process. Much of the research data is interpreted out of context and as such becomes a destructive tool rather than one with educational and sociocultural value. This is important if we bear in mind that the so-called typical Puerto Rican family has been "identified" as one with many children which is on public assistance. As stated before, there are many types of families, family compositions and social levels, none of which can be denied. At all levels, part of the migration experience is dealing with the stereotyped ideas and misconceptions about Puerto Ricans and their culture which have been reinforced by limited traditional research.

In the model of the Puerto Rican family there is a strong support system including members not only of the nuclear family, but of the extended family as well. The precarious situation of the Puerto Rican community generates tremendous stress and the support system weakens with the new demands upon the individual family. Adjusting to a different social and cultural environment causes changes in the family structure, roles, patterns of child rearing and the network of relationships. One important change in the family structure is the weakening of ties with the extended family which tend not only to diminish but many times to become non-existent. These family ties are important not only in helping with daily problem solving and other needs, but also in dealing with crisis situations. They also offer a continuous source of affectional and emotional support, which is crucial in sustaining and nourishing the individual members as well as the family as a unit. Consequently, families experience more isolation and despair in their new environment if there are no alternatives to this extended family support system.

Type of Services Needed by the Puerto Rican Migrant Family

Services which provide staff and resources equipped to deal with the cultural differences and family life styles, encourage a better utilization of available services and a more efficient communication between provider and recipient. A pertinent example is the young migrant wife who discovered that she is pregnant and feared the experience of being far from her parents and attending a clinic in a large municipal hospital, a setting unfamiliar to her. She was accompanied by her Spanish-speaking neighbor who had attended the clinic previously. Her fears were assuaged when she was introduced to the nurse and to the social worker, who were both Spanish-speaking. She was re-assured by her experience at the clinic and felt so free to discuss her pregnancy that her continued attendance was ensured. The nurse accompanied her during the physical examination, a further confirmation of their sensitivity to her culturally developed sense of modesty.

She was invited to attend the Spanish language parenting classes with her husband, which were held in the evening for the convenience of working people. This was a satisfactory experience as the language barrier and cultural differences did not present a problem to the staff. Such support systems provide viable alternatives to the migrant family far from their extended support system.

Another area of conflict is in the changing husband and wife roles. Generally, it has been easier for women to get jobs in the U.S. because the positions available are in the traditional female sector. At times they become aggressive and assertive as they gain confidence and develop a sense of power. This may cause feelings of insecurity in the male who finds it difficult to adjust to a more flexible role and a shift of power. This is an area around which much conflict exists,

especially among the poor and lower educated families who often lack constructive communication skills which in turn hamper the negotiating and compromising process used to resolve differences.

The most striking change in the Puerto Rican family structure is found in the growing number of single heads of households. Of the 479,772 Puerto Rican families in the United States, 60.5% are headed by males. Even in these families, the parental roles are undergoing great change due to the women's changing role and other social changes. When the families are headed by females, 39.9%, then the parental role becomes more complex and demanding. The causes for the increase in female-headed families are many and they include: a high rate of divorce and desertion by the husband, teenage pregnancies, and choice of parental style by liberated females. In this situation, the support system becomes even more crucial in order to fulfill the needs of the individuals and those of the family and to prevent situations from becoming worse. The concepts of marriage and family counseling are rather new to this population and the community resources are scarce. However, there are informal resources such as friends, relatives, and indigenous resources such as spiritualists that are often utilized to consult problems of marital and family relations. All are a part of the traditional extended family support system.

Preventive services are less available to this population. There is great need for education, information, and preventive services related to marital difficulties, which approach the conflicting situations within the socio-cultural context. In areas such as: problems in the marital relationship, children's behavioral problems, children having problems in school, the problems with adolescents, intergenerational conflicts, loss of control over the teenagers (especially the daughters) and the care of older relatives.

The child rearing patterns of the Puerto Rican family are different from those of the dominant American system and the children are exposed to values and expectations through school, the community and media which are contradictory. This causes much conflict in the family and confusion to the child.

A Puerto Rican mother visits the school that her child attends upon receiving a notice from the teacher. She is told that the child is too passive because he/she does not talk too much, remains by himself/herself during play periods and when the teacher talks to him/her about the observed behavior, the child does not look at her or respond. While the teacher anticipates that the child's behavior is peculiar, the mother finds it very proper. The child is behaving in a manner that pleases the mother and fulfills the expectations of what a "good child is". Understanding cultural patterns and values is essential in order to have an understanding between teacher, mother and child.

Problems with adolescents are very prevalent in the Puerto Rican family. One common situation is the loss of parental control which culminates many times in a breakdown of the relationships. A good example is the following situation: Pedro and Maria have two adolescent children, the oldest daughter, who is 17

years old and a son 15 years old. After frequent arguments because of differences in parental values, the children left the home and went to live with other relatives. They both dropped out of school and went to work. After a family encounter with a Puerto Rican family counselor and various sessions of family counseling, the youngsters returned to the home, are working part-time and returned to school. The parents have developed awareness to their children's needs and realized that they were trying to implement a parenting style centered on what they learned within a traditional cultural experience but without realizing that the time and the setting had changed.

Although the mainland Puerto Rican population is primarily young, there exist problems related to a growing-older generation. As the family moves toward the the nuclear grouping, the elders have less authority because of diminishing role in the family structure.

Specialized facilities for the care of the elderly do not respond to the needs of the Hispanic elderly. Unless there is an effort to plan according to the socio-cultural needs of this elderly population, they will remain abandoned. Often the nursing home residents must rely on the visits of bilingual students in placement to provide any and all sense of "family".

Since the impoverished situation of the Puerto Rican community generates stress, hopelessness and powerlessness it is not strange to find a high incidence of problems of family relationships which may eventually culminate in alcoholism, drug abuse, child abuse, school drop-outs, etc., all of which are warning signs of a deterioration process and a breakdown of the coping mechanisms.

The systems that provide services for the families are not responding to their needs and many times are the source of increased stress rather than relief. Inertia and indifference become a costly and painful process in the presence of visible signs and the symptomatology that culminates in the social pathology previously mentioned. The present systems concerned with the delivery of services need to change their traditional attitudes and philosophy when dealing with the inner city poor and culturally different clientele.

Lack of awareness of basic rights, communication barriers and the complexity of the systems themselves are major obstacles in seeking, utilizing and delivering services, especially to a population that is culturally and linguistically different. There are distortions and interpretations out of the cultural context that can lead to serious consequences and mistakes in assessment, diagnosis, treatment, placement, classification, etc. These can be applied in various settings such as schools, health services, social services, etc. The systems need to provide quality services regardless of differences. There is a need to change the focus of the problem, since the people are not the problem. The institutions with deficiencies and limitations have problems in delivering services because the failure is structural.

There exist models of preventive services which emphasize the re-education of the family to survive and to function with the proper support systems, there

is a reservoir of talent and leadership in our own communities, both here and in Puerto Rico.

A good example is the Puerto Rican Family Institute in New York which serves the migrant family and in Puerto Rico the returned migrant family.

The Puerto Rican Family Institute has been highly successful in:

- preventing family breakdown;
- promoting patterns of adjustment;
- preventing children from entering foster care, or to public and private institutions, by the strengthening of the family ties and development of skills to eliminate and/or reduce risk factors to a minimum;
- preventing further deterioration of adolescents in need of supervision or who have already been exhibiting delinquent behavior;
- treating adequately the mentally ill Hispanic by preventing the need for hospitalization, keeping the chronically ill functioning in the community and breaking the pattern of multiple hospitalizations, etc.
- training and rehabilitating a group of young adults suffering from acute developmental disabilities through their incorporation to community life. (The agency has for over 10 years operated three intermediate care facilities which combine research and service components);
- promoting services for educationally deprived children through a pilot project undertaken in conjunction with the Board of Education which combined research and service to the target groups.

This is an important and crucial step in the philosophy and in the approaches to working with the migratory experience, since traditional services operate mostly within the pathological model. These traditional services focus on dysfunction rather than on the strengths of families and individuals, and many times foster and prolong dependence.

Recently (11/83), the Puerto Rican Family Institute held a three-day forum in Puerto Rico about the needs of the Puerto Rican migrant population and how they were being met, both on the island and on the mainland. Representatives from various systems (education, health, labor, social services and others) shared their experiences and discussed the services offered, pointed out needs and made recommendations for the future. Among the areas discussed, the need to coordinate services and efforts was a significant one, both in Puerto Rico and on the mainland.

Another example of family service would be the "Instituto del Hogar" (The Home Institute) in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico which is a voluntary agency geared to marital and family counseling. They have been providing crisis intervention and follow-up and also preventive services to families.

"Instituto del Hogar" (The Home Institute) also held a forum recently (2/84), with the theme of "Preventive Services for Children". Once more, the need to coordinate efforts and services was uppermost. In both of these activities, in which a variety of professionals from different fields participated,

there was a consensus about the importance of preventive and supportive services to help families make a better and healthier adjustment, in view of the inevitable social changes. These services provide a model that can be implemented in other communities in the future.

Conclusions

Large segments of the Puerto Rican population are caught in the midst of rapid social change and in the cycle of poverty. The impoverished families have to face such stressful conditions that their strengths and capacity to survive are undermined and even exhausted.

The migration process between Puerto Rico and the mainland is continuous. Approaching the situation of the migrant population, evaluating the needs and future planning has to be a simultaneous process at the national level both on the mainland and the island.

Traditional services have not had keen awareness of the needs, the rights, the cultural differences and the family styles of the migrant population.

Services have been geared mostly to existing pathology and dysfunction, therefore, preventive and sustaining aspects have been neglected. It is crucial to realize that the survival of the family will have major influence in the future. The success of the family needs more concern and involvement; efforts of both private and government sectors need to be coordinated in creating opportunities to enhance the family experience.

Unless the family support systems are reinforced and strengthened, the future of the Puerto Rican family, already plagued by the powerlessness, hopelessness and all the oppressiveness of poverty, will be uncertain, no doubt with a great loss of human potential. Younger and future generations will be condemned to more insensible deterioration in a society with all the means and the expertise to make significant changes in the human quest for survival.

Recommendations for the Future

1. The organization of a national task force for advocacy, with the participation of elected officials.
2. Assessment of the effects of national legislation on the family. Re-evaluation of services to families and determining the need to create new programs and to revamp old ones.
3. To develop a plan for the rescue of the poor Puerto Rican family from a state of stagnation and indifference.
4. Support research geared toward the study of the changes within the migrant family and its impact on the society and culture.

This is an idealistic and difficult agenda but unless there is an effort for planning and action in order to help the family to cope with change and ravages of poverty and deprivation, the future of younger generations will be far from the American dream.

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PUERTO RICAN YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

by Dr. Jose Hernandez

Let us imagine that last year the United States invaded a Caribbean nation having about six million people whose cultural background resembled that of Puerto Rico. Next, in an 85 year time warp, everything took place that has occurred in the Puerto Rican world. Today, the descendants of the migrants in the United States (over two of the six million) turned to us for advice as to what policy to follow in the future. We who have lived through the process would be in a position to use our experience to benefit people much like ourselves.

Most likely, we would begin describing our problems as a racially stigmatized group of second-rate citizens from an outlying possession, situated at the bottom of American society. We would talk about solutions offered by the American "dream," policies that did not function as expected. When asked to reduce the options for action to their most essential elements, we would likely suggest: a) assimilation; b) the civil rights/minority model, and c) pluralism. Each of these would be said to have produced some benefits for the community. But comparing results with the effort and involvement required, most of us would talk about steps forward, and steps back.

We would further describe divisions within our community and our own lives. How most of us must follow the assimilation model in our work careers and economic life. About politics, we would recount 20 years of policies determined mainly by white Anglo responses to the needs and wants of American blacks. True, Puerto Ricans have had some success in organizing ourselves in response to government programs aimed at improving the living conditions of people classified as "minority." Our desire for togetherness has also prompted us to talk about efforts to reshape education and advance a way of life we share with other descendants of migrants from the Caribbean and Middle America. But pressed to explain why pluralism has not succeeded, we would explain that neither economics nor politics have favored the implementation of this idea.

What, then, would we suggest for the future? Some of us would talk about empowerment. We would do so with caution, because this relatively new idea might not promise anything more than assimilation, the civil rights/minority

model, and pluralism. The benefits of empowerment might not justify the enormous requirements of energy, attention, time and money. Thinking back to our efforts during the past 20 years, the test of any new idea necessitates another imaginary consideration. Suppose we returned to 1965, would empowerment have worked out better than what we know to have followed the national civil rights legislation? Even though the answer were no, we would still have to address the question: At our point in time, doesn't empowerment make more sense than previous policy directions?

On the chance that the answer to either or both of these questions is yes, I decided to explore the empowerment option. The following considerations expand on *Puerto Rican Youth Employment* (Maplewood, N.J.: Waterfront Press, 1983), which provides the factual evidence and a preliminary version of the notions presented. Of equal importance were the insights gathered during eight years of studying the social, economic and political situation of Puerto Rican teenagers and young adults in the United States. Also, I have lived in Puerto Rican neighborhoods and have been involved in Puerto Rican causes in a variety of ways. Included are the most essential results of observation and interviews in the school, work and community environments of Milwaukee, Chicago, and New York City, and in federal and local government programs. Considering all of this, I returned to ideas developed in *People, Power and Policy* (Palo Alto, CA: National Press, 1974) and with the help of colleagues at the Latino Institute, learned about recent applications of empowerment to the Puerto Rican situation in the United States. I have also read the contemporary literature on empowerment and have taught courses on related topics, with the participation of Puerto Rican college students.

Chances are that by year 2000, as many Puerto Ricans will live in the United States as in Puerto Rico, and that Puerto Rico's political status will remain indefinite. But even if it were resolved, many Puerto Ricans in the United States would likely remain living in their homes—near family, friends, work and community. A new society will have fully emerged from the "surplus" labor force that migrated to the United States during the 1950s and before. Puerto Ricans in the United States will feel a sense of peoplehood and ownership regarding a century of human experience unique to themselves, although related to Puerto Rico, and similar to other racial and ethnic groups in the United States.

Our general purpose here is to discuss a national policy for Puerto Rican youth. They, more than other segments in our community, will be affected by what happens in the next five years. As years go by, the children and adolescents of today will reach maturity and have leadership of the society in formation. Therefore, we must be guided by the situation we want for Puerto Ricans in the year 2000. Our vision will be a legacy to a generation whose lives could be improved by the right choice of policy for the immediate future. This paper was organized to help our discussion by using research results as a background

for speculation about the possible benefits of empowerment.

Community Empowerment

The most fundamental research conclusion of the research mentioned above is that Puerto Rican youth have little or no power; that is, the chance to be self-determining in their social, economic and political life, and to influence others accordingly. If things were different, we would not repeatedly find discouraging statistics: only 60 percent completing high school; half of the teenagers in the labor force unable to find jobs; continued employment in routine, low-paid, low-status, insecure and unpleasant occupations; sixty percent of households below or just above the poverty line. Granted a certain margin of error and indications of minor improvements here and there, all of these measures and more describe people stuck at the economic bottom of United States society. Along with this goes a low social evaluation by others and very limited political power, especially the ability to change the system which keeps Puerto Ricans in a stigmatized, disadvantaged and subordinate condition.

For reasons beyond the scope of this paper, young Americans generally have very limited power in the system. Families and other institutions assist them in attaining a successful adult life. But this structure also discourages the effective participation of youth in the decision-making process, especially their urge for innovation. Alienation and apathy result from a perceived lack of integration in an adult society inclined to have cyclical mood swings that bring confusion about such basic values as equality. For minorities, youth could be a peak time for changing places in the inequitable arrangements produced by the American brand of racism and sexism. In the past, ASPIRA, the Young Lords Party and similar organizations have succeeded in fostering involvement in such changes. Today, however, low rates of voting and other forms of political expression show that minority youth do not see these changes as realistically possible. In the final analysis, an escape from adult society into one's leisure world makes more sense than a futile attempt to change the system.

A deeply rooted identify crisis intensifies this situation for Puerto Rican youth. Deprived of understanding, acceptance and opportunity in the United States, they generally consider being Puerto Rican both a positive and negative condition. Except for their families, very little in the environment teaches them something else. If the label "Puerto Rican" were abolished, almost all would fit into American society according to options already available: white, black and Latino. While these alternatives may offer greater power, sentiment and family ties sustain a basic loyalty to a Puerto Rican identity. But this refers only to a certain aspects of life, and is constantly undermined by rejection from authority figures having values traditional to Puerto Rico as a criterion of right and wrong. The low self-esteem typical of Puerto Rican youth stems from their

perceptions of futility in measuring up to majority expectations in both the United States and Puerto Rico.

Observers generally agree that a drastic change in this destructive process would benefit the Puerto Rican people in the United States. To some extent, the distinction between "youth" and "community" is redundant. Half of the Puerto Ricans in the United States are younger than 20 years and those 20 to 35 make up almost a quarter of the population. There are now more children born in the United States than the generation of migrants who arrived by tens of thousands in the 1950s. Also, renewed migration from Puerto Rico during the 1970s and early 1980s has meant a further youthening, as thousands of teenagers and young adults have been added again. Today, Puerto Ricans are typically in transition to adulthood or in the initial stages of mature life. What happens in schooling and the quest for jobs is therefore crucial to the future of Puerto Ricans in the United States.

The major question is how greater power can be obtained. The evidence on political participation shows that conventional means promise only a certain degree of the empowerment needed to make a real difference in such institutions as public schools, and in the provision for jobs to earn a decent living:

- at least 75 percent of Puerto Ricans live in areas defined as "central-city," including (but not limited to) the "barrio" or ethnic neighborhoods of New York, Chicago, and several of the nation's largest cities;
- in the barrios most candidates for local office compete with other Puerto Ricans or other minorities for a very limited number of positions, and
- elsewhere Puerto Ricans are generally locked out of local politics by other groups that dominate the system. In either case
- those elected make up a fraction of the many who would work effectively for the community, if the established system allowed for wider involvement and representation.
- Most of the major issues require changes in the opportunity structure of entire administrative units;
- therefore, a major direction in Puerto Rican politics has been to use the executive position of community agencies for various political functions;
- another strategy has been to gain an appointment having a broad scope of influence, as director of a government program, or advisor to a major political figure. Today, more than a dozen Puerto Rican elected officials and a modest number of appointed administrators represent the community at city, state and federal levels. Nevertheless, this remains a fraction of the positions that could be filled, if participation were more equitable and at least, adequate.

What, then, would be needed to empower Puerto Rican youth? First, some sort of organizational arrangement that would provide the experience needed to get involved in politics. As in the process of breaking into a work career, young people need some structure for participation and representation in the decisions made by elected or appointive public officials and agency executives.

The National Puerto Rican Coalition could obtain support for an intern program providing a chance to work and learn in various government settings. It could employ youth to help in lobbying activities and facilitate their participation in such efforts for American youth, in general.

These solutions assume a desire for involvement that is generally absent, however. In order to turn apathy into positive energy, a clearly defined and easy-handed way of organizing people at the neighborhood level is the point of departure. This means raising their everyday experience of alienation from school, unemployment, and poverty to the realization that these are typically Puerto Rican problems, and not matters exclusively of individual or family choice. For the purpose, a communication network is needed: people must be informed as to what is (not) happening in regard to Puerto Ricans. The dissemination of timely, accurate and informative materials is a central goal of the National Puerto Rican Coalition.

But equally essential and currently weak is the process of people defining and prioritizing their wants and requirements for having a decent life. These wishes must then be converted into a message sent through a system of increasing influence to levels where solutions can be sought for common problems. Better coordination of community organizations facilitating the flow of return information could thus be considered.

Secondly, provision must be made for the effective representation of the various segments of the Puerto Rican community in the communication process. This requires an organizational structure in which each segment relates to a group or person who articulates their point of view and wishes. Also, the unification of all segments must be facilitated for action on community issues. When and where it makes an important difference to be Puerto Rican, the structure must count on the support of as many Puerto Ricans as possible.

These requirements go well beyond the present goals and objectives of the National Puerto Rican Coalition. Perhaps the most efficient way of achieving empowerment would be in a national political organization, in which the Coalition would play an essential role. This comprehensive structure would not be attached to an elective or appointive position or any other political body. Its mission would include such goals as the ab[illegible] to:

- link major community issues with a national Puerto Rican agenda, coordinating the strength of efforts at all levels;
- retain adaptability to community size, ranging from a few hundred in certain cities to over a million in New York;
- enable Puerto Ricans to negotiate and manage coalitions with other constituencies;
- influence public policy through advocacy of specifically Puerto Rican concerns and broader issues in which Puerto Ricans may have a decided opinion;
- limit other aspects of its program to empowerment functions: community organization and communication, fact finding and reporting, the monitoring of progress

in the implementation of policy directives, and advisory services to government, business and civic institutions;

- avoid substituting for, or duplicating functions attributable in the United States to public officials and agencies, the foundations or voluntary associations oriented toward improving life conditions;
- refer all requests for things other than empowerment to the appropriate sources of help from participating organizations and other agencies;
- dispense money and jobs only to the extent required to fulfill the empowerment functions of the structure. In brief, the comprehensive structure needed is a political organization controlled by Puerto Ricans, broadly representative of our people, and capable of addressing major community concerns as simply and economically as possible—our own system for coping with and gaining advantages from other power systems in the United States.

My reading of our situation in the research completed and personal knowledge of many Puerto Ricans in a variety of places and conditions is that the elements of empowerment already exist in our community. First, because there is a great deal of pent-up energy among Puerto Rican youth, stemming from years of frustration, anger and resentment. Secondly, because we have already taken steps to organize ourselves in response to our perceptions of needs and wants. Along with the National Coalition, several other organizations could be united in the comprehensive structure. In ways later detailed in this paper, effective leadership could emerge among Puerto Rican youth in the United States. In many places there are networks of community ties, friendships and acquaintances that could crystalize into a genuine national constituency.

The third and most convincing argument for empowerment is that we now have the solutions at hand. After so many years of research, thinking and practical efforts, we know what we want. The question of how we can get it demands a similar answer. True, our experience generally shows that the "how" reduces to political power. But the specific strategies needed and considered appropriate to attain political power have yet to be clearly defined and implemented. Later sections of this paper will describe how the comprehensive structure could act to significantly improve living conditions for Puerto Ricans in the next five years. However, a preliminary consideration regards the prices to be paid for the potential benefits of empowerment.

The Costs

First, empowerment would necessitate unity among Puerto Ricans in the United States. The cost would be our willingness and determination to put aside conflicting viewpoints and scattered loyalties for the sake of our people. It is a high price to pay because previous policies have promoted divisiveness among Puerto Ricans and internal struggles are taken for granted in many things that (do not) happen. Moreover, our present system of rewards and penalties for action is

tied to the consequences of disunity. We all have something to lose in deciding to work together as a single force.

Secondly, some of the energy, attention, time and money invested in the pursuit of previous policies must be redirected. I am not suggesting that we abandon nor transform the institutions created to benefit the community. What is necessary is to better coordinate their efforts as interrelated parts of a comprehensive structure. Thus, a major discussion point is how effective collaboration could be arranged.

A third price we must pay is our effort to make an inventory of our sources of strength and relate these to the plan for cooperation. Regarding resources for implementing policies we have been accustomed to think first about preparing proposals for consideration by external funding agencies. My perception is that we need to first determine what we would like to (and can) do, on our own. And from a careful assessment of our strength, move to determine what we need from outside.

A fourth price is our actions to program victories. By this is meant support for what may initially appear to be minor successes, and a commitment to move from these to seemingly more important achievements. This is crucial for the average person to perceive some tangible evidence of changes, and to acquire hope and confidence in the general improvement of living conditions.

The fifth price is our effort to obtain a more clearly defined and advantageous relation with the "significant other" groups that influence our world: Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico, other Hispanic groups in the United States, American blacks, and other oppressed minorities. For example, many of the employment and income problems of Puerto Rican youth are common to issues in the American women's movement. In an era of coalition, it empowers Puerto Ricans to find out how we fit in and can draw strength from our relations with other systems of power.

A sixth price will be our determination to seek the additional resources needed for empowerment to work. Up to now, this has meant reliance on government grants and private foundations. As these funds have continually diminished, alternatives must be considered. This may require us to reorient our approach to resources, away from "the project" to other ways of accomplishing our objectives.

Fixing the Public School Mess

The second major finding of the research completed is that most of Puerto Rican youth are poorly prepared by their schooling for jobs other than the least advantageous in the American labor force. Let us accept the basic assumption that human populations contain a relatively constant level and array of natural ability. The development of talent therefore depends largely on the opportunity

structure of the society in which people reach maturity.

In our experience with public education, the record shows that:

- the major avenue for the expression of talent is limited to the less than half who graduate from high school;
- the large remainder (and many high school graduates, as well) are destined to use their talent in ways that promise little or no developmental changes, beyond earning enough money "to get by;"
- some 15 to 20 percent are enabled to have work careers offering an opportunity for using talent in more than routine and repetitive tasks;
- most of these are engaged in technical or organizational specialties typical of skilled manual occupations, office jobs and with pre-determined descriptions of lower-to-middle levels of supervision;
- only a very small percentage of youth reach achievement levels defined by the American majority as deserving a high level of social recognition and financial reward;
- those finding an appropriate environment for the fulfillment of creative talent make up a statistical rarity.

In comparison with other segments of the United States population, the data clearly document an unchanging set of constraints on the evolution of our human resources. True, certain signs of minimal progress can be squeezed out of the numbers. But the past 20 years have signified much greater advances for the rest of the nation's population. My research led to the conclusion that simply having a job contributes much more than formal education to the job occupational and income levels of Puerto Rican youth. This points to structural constraints in the economic order, later addressed in this paper. It also returns the argument to the need for a reform in the educational system, because whatever opportunities develop in the economic order must be accompanied by a significant improvement in the educational attainment of Puerto Rican youth.

On the topic of how we can move from facts to action, the Puerto Rican community's efforts to solve this problem must be cited in evidence. If any concern has ever elicited a broad-based, unanimous agreement among Puerto Ricans in the United States, it has been our desire to fix up what we consider to be a messy situation in the public school system. No other issue has commanded greater attention, energy and talent. As a people, our leadership is mainly composed of educators and professionals in service occupations, such as counseling, social case work, agency activities, and public administrative positions. It is therefore reasonable to expect some signs of success for the use of talent in this direction.

Reality is very different, however. Any fragment of information to the contrary must stand the test of an apparent consensus that only modest progress has been made in solving the public school mess. But more importantly, the repeated experience of alienation from the public school system in the United States has left many Puerto Rican leaders with a critical sense of what is needed

in the education of Puerto Ricans. Although the use of this talent has produced alternative plans, the intellectual and emotional path of most Puerto Rican children through the public school system today resembles the experience of the parent generation before 1965.

A first step in changing the opportunity structure for Puerto Ricans would be gaining a much greater level of recognition, enablement and rewards groups and persons with innovative and effective plans to solve the public school mess, and for those with the organizational ability to carry out the plans. This would validate the occupational worth of workers in our community who made great efforts to reach excellence. Validation would in turn serve important purposes among Puerto Rican children. At least, it would provide them with a readily visible example of how Puerto Ricans can be successful at a high level of social recognition in the United States. The major occupational commitments of ethnic groups are known to strongly influence the life of succeeding generations. Having success in public education as a group specialty would greatly enhance the possibilities of developing Puerto Rican talent during the next 15 to 20 years.

The follow-up to this consideration does not involve a need for creating new organizational structures. Advancement in education is a major goal of most Puerto Rican organizations, and in other areas of community concern the predominant mode of action shows a strong academic influence. The crucial need seems to be for an effective link between existing community resources and the groups or persons holding decision-making power over and within the public school system. It is essentially a political, and not an intellectual issue. The missing element is power.

Part of the political problem would be solved by somehow equating the orientation of non-Puerto Rican constituencies with the composition and needs of the school-age population. In the typical political unit, most voters are majority persons, generally older than Puerto Ricans and less concerned with school issues, although vaguely aware that the "Spanish" people consider (bilingual) education a major issue. By comparison, most of the classmates of Puerto Rican children are blacks and Latinos trying to find a place for themselves in a basically hostile environment. In some cases, white Anglo caution about change is strengthened by the black drive for integration. For reaffirming assimilation or gaining in number of minority children, it helps both whites and blacks to think of "Hispanic" children as movable from their neighborhoods to a dispersed set of specialty schools, or as nothing special, if they stay near home. As a general result, the predominent political influences emerging from the general public to the elected officials remain mostly contrary to Puerto Rican concerns in education.

Let us imagine, however, that improvement and efficiency in public education were to become a generic political issue. Regardless of who was to blame, each Puerto Rican child who left the school system or did not reach the fulfill-

ment of talent would represent a negative product. Other such outcomes would be easy to find: the encouragement of girls away from mathematics and the sciences; the general lowering of reading and verbal scores; and serious problems of interfacing with rapid labor force changes and redirections in the American economy. An idea often heard nowadays is to look at the public school system as a major institution in need of being strengthened and reorganized. If this idea were to have broad-based support it might enhance the opportunities of Puerto Rican leaders to implement their plans for reform in public education. That is, if Puerto Rican interests were a genuine part of such reform.

It may be unrealistic to expect such a change on a national level, at least in the near future. But as the municipal governments of the nation's largest cities consolidate their minority leadership, it may begin in certain places. Just as with major policy changes in the past, the reform would vary from place to place. Much would depend on the workability of coalitions with other constituencies and the local importance of the quality-in-education issues.

In any case, there are some practical activities that could be supported with a view to enabling Puerto Ricans to initiate reform:

- much greater resources could bolster networking among Puerto Rican educators and civic leaders;
- their attention could be focused (once more) on developing workable plans for the quality education of Puerto Ricans; but this time, provision must be made for an organizational linkage with the decision-makers over and within the school system, and
- political pressure must be exerted to assure receptivity to the recommendations at the highest decision-making level of a city's public school system, and
- middle management positions such as principal and school district supervisor must be opened to Puerto Ricans oriented to change, in order to implement the plans in areas of significant enrollment.

The last two points are the most important, because they are the elements which generally have not had an adequate chance in attempts to solve the public school mess up to the present time. In many communities Puerto Ricans are not represented in school staffing, except as teacher's aides or instructors incidental to the education of Puerto Rican children. In New York City and Chicago an increasing number of Puerto Ricans have been appointed as program specialists and principals. Puerto Rican district superintendents and even a chancellor of public education have been appointed in New York. But such appointments provide only a partial solution if unrelated to the reform measures developed by our community, or if political circumstances constrain our ability to implement the needed changes.

Another missing element is the participation of Puerto Rican youth in the needed educational reform. Certainly, most of their disaffection has been with the schools attended. But a lack of communication with older Puerto Ricans has also lessened the involvement of youth in proposed changes. Solutions to

the public school mess are typically generated from graduate studies, conferences, and academic experience at higher levels—not in consultation with the children and adolescents affected. Thus, what may seem a perfect policy may partly miss the mark and fail to elicit the involvement of the people for whom it was intended. A provision for genuinely participating in change would also enable Puerto Rican youth to make known what few researchers have documented; namely, factors contributing to success or failure at the classroom level. This kind of information is essential for the practical working out of solutions beyond the "model program" stage of development.

Research and programs developed by ASPIRA and the Hispanic Alliance in Chicago have shown that Puerto Rican college students are also interested in fixing the public school mess. With sufficient orientation and organization, college students could serve in part-time and para-professional roles in the elementary and secondary schools. With supervision and guidance from teachers and school officials they could offer career orientation and activities aimed at raising motivation among Puerto Rican children. For example, certain college students could be guest speakers on the Puerto Rican community in social study classes. Others could tutor small groups on reading or simply be available for rap sessions. The general objective would be to facilitate contact between the children and persons much like themselves, who have survived in the educational system.

Since most Puerto Rican college students depend on a part-time job to finance their education, little time is now left for things other than work and study. A special program substituting the para-professional activities just described for the jobs held by college students would make it possible for them to serve in that capacity. It would also be an incentive for high school students to advance their education at the university level. The interpersonal communication and leadership experience would be of considerable value to the community, as college graduates would later assume positions of professional responsibility in labor situations involving Puerto Rican workers.

Recasting the Puerto Rican Image

The third major research conclusion is that Puerto Rican youth are excluded from many career opportunities by job segregation. This means assignment by social and economic forces to such work as repetitive machine operation in factories; janitorial functions; restaurant kitchen help; assistance in institutionalized care and supermarket cashier and stockroom responsibilities. These jobs are considered "Puerto Rican" in much the same way as secretaries and nurses are expected to be women. The point here is not just that Puerto Rican jobs are low-paid, low-status, insecure and unpleasant occupations; but more importantly, the flow of Puerto Rican youth into "nonconventional" careers is

impeded by the general public's assessment of what they should be doing for a living.

The usual policy approach to enable Puerto Rican youth to follow nonconventional career lines centers on an arrangement to let a small number in, by exception to the discriminatory pattern of employment. The assumption is that their success will somehow open doors for more Puerto Ricans and eventually the community will benefit from the mobility of its more successful members. The resources needed are often in the form of financial assistance for learning specialities in which Puerto Ricans are hardly represented. Placement on an affirmative action basis is usually considered as a follow-up to training in nonconventional fields. The ultimate goal is supposed to be changes in social restrictions limiting the employment of Puerto Ricans to what are now considered Puerto Rican jobs. Theoretically, Puerto Rican youth could then aspire to any job, as long as they had the required talent, preparation and motivation.

The strategy just described remains crucial to our future as a community and will be discussed in the following section. A more fundamental aspect requires preliminary attention, nevertheless. Frequently overlooked is the fact that the roots of job segregation are in the mental images of people, particularly those held by individuals with power in shaping the labor force: corporate investors, major employers, the clients of big business and government officials. Therefore, a direct and effective way of opening opportunities for Puerto Ricans would be in changing the way we are viewed by these decision makers. In other words, more positive stereotypes may open doors, if a concerted effort were made to portray Puerto Ricans in a more favorable way than the negative tradition initiated by the "West Side Story" and the New York Daily Mirror.

Again, the Puerto Rican community's experience can be called in evidence. Aside from public education, our high-level skills tend to cluster in the general area of visual and performing arts and such verbal skills as writing, conversation and interpretation. This means a highly competitive line of professional work, with very few individuals reaching a high degree of acclaim or even recognition as conventional workers. For Puerto Ricans, discrimination on a group and individual basis makes entry and success in the arts and communication even more difficult than for the average person. But in addition, a distinctly Puerto Rican style or subject matter usually has little or no appeal to decision makers, except as useful to portray traditionally negative stereotypes. As a result, a great deal of talent is misused or not used at all.

The basic policy direction suggested here is to enable this talent to reach some degree of professional fulfillment in changing the public image of Puerto Ricans. In one or another way, a national Puerto Rican multimedia effort is needed, to do the following:

- produce quality material about Puerto Ricans, in a positive and progressive manner, readily distributable to the community and the media;

- act as a surrogate for the network of contacts and influence missing to Puerto Rican artists and writers emerging from obscurity and poverty;
- negotiate cooperative ventures with the mainstream media, aimed at delivering a favorable message about Puerto Ricans to key decision-makers;
- develop major media outlets for a community viewpoint on issues affecting Puerto Ricans;
- serve as a focus and facilitating agent for efforts to create the imagery needed to instill pride among Puerto Rican youth;
- evaluate the impact of various lines of activity in changing the Puerto Rican image in the most effective, economical way, and
- adapt the same strategies to the improvement of the continental Puerto Rican image among the people living in Puerto Rico.

If all of these objectives were in some way fulfilled, Puerto Ricans would be labeled as "good for the United States" by more than the 17 percent shown in research on the American public. With a significant leap in our acceptability to, say, 50 percent or more, every other person in the opportunity structure would be disposed to consider a Puerto Rican for not just the arts and verbal abilities, but a wider range of technical and professional specialities. And, some of the most talented people in the community would be given a chance to develop their careers, in the process.

Community Economic Development

The fourth major set of research conclusions pertain to the many Puerto Rican young people who wish to have a rewarding career, but not necessarily one that requires a college education or highly creative kinds of work. They represent the persons for whom the generalizations are made on the basis of statistical analysis; for example, that:

- women outnumber men by a considerable margin, owing mainly to differences in migration patterns to and from Puerto Rico;
- women have sole responsibility for almost half of the households, a trend begun by older women, but which now includes many aged 20 to 29;
- migration is extensive (including within the United States) but about half have always lived in their community and many more "settle down" for long stretches;
- very low income results from jobs affected by the prevailing male/female wage differentials and the "triple jeopardy" of social restrictions on employment by gender, ethnicity and race;
- a shift away from factory work has meant greater numbers in low-status service jobs, although some are in clerical positions (women) or skilled manual jobs (men);
- full-time, yearly employment seldom describes the work situation: most depend on seasonal, part-time, or high-turnover jobs, if employed at all;
- unemployment is commonly experienced, both as officially recognized and disguised in the situation of persons not yet in or currently out of the "labor force" who nevertheless wish to work, if they had the chance;

- many of the underemployed or unemployed are willing to receive job training or go back to school, but marking time (e.g. "hanging out") and such alternatives as military service, having a baby or doing odd jobs (the "hustle") remain typical;
- simply having a job is much more important than educational background as an explanation for the level of money earned;
- given the chance to work, education does make an economic difference, but only for those with a post-secondary technical or professional background;
- with some minor exceptions, language(s) spoken and birthplace do not influence employment as greatly as the disruptive consequences of migration, itself;
- family obligations and health conditions have a much greater influence on who works and how money is earned in a household, than the education, language, birthplace and migration of its members;
- if the number of earners in a household is held constant in a mathematical comparison, women with sole responsibility are as effective in supporting their families as those sharing the responsibility with men; and
- the monetary contributions of Puerto Rican youth are a significant factor in the economic well-being of the households in which they live.

As a general picture, we find people struggling to survive, despite overwhelming constraints and with a sense of futility about what, if anything, can be done to improve their economic situation.

This picture differs essentially from the condition of "new" immigrants legally admitted to the United States in recent times, people assigned by the same economic forces to a position of upward mobility. The educational preference policy for admission has enabled them to join the American labor force after acquiring job-related skills in their nations of origin. White flight from central-city areas has further provided a preferential chance for many to move into middle-class environments. Downward mobility may be initially experienced as new immigrants take the kind of jobs usually assigned to American blacks and Indians, Chicanos and Puerto Ricans. But increasing evidence shows that immigrants with a social appearance different from long-standing native and citizen minorities are encouraged by the prevailing economic order to move up to positions generally closed to the minorities by a deeply-rooted pattern of exclusion.

Regardless of one's policy perspective, it must be recognized also that most of the factors in "what can be done" are not subject to direct control by the Puerto Rican community. Such things as the decline of neighborhood economies, the flight of employers from central-city areas and discrimination are matters of general policy in the metropolitan areas where most Puerto Ricans live. General policy has favored a shift to post-industrial employment in sectors like banking, tourism, interpersonal services and retail sales. Where the "good" jobs are found, Puerto Ricans are not welcome, except by exception to policies favoring others. Therefore, major changes in metropolitan policies must be approached directly; that is, through the kind of advocacy efforts already discussed: empowerment, fixing the public school mess, and recasting the Puerto Rican image.

There are, moreover, many things that can be done by Puerto Rican organizations to enhance the economic opportunities of their members. For example, the National Puerto Rican Coalition could expand its programs to include a major effort to overcome job segregation. Proposals for legislation and lobbying could be directed to Congressional action in creating effective employment for minority youth. Inclusion of Puerto Ricans in these and existing programs must be sought, for whatever job experience and earnings are provided. Leadership development projects could seek to identify and empower Puerto Rican youth at levels relevant to the average person. Greater pressure could be placed on major commercial organizations profitting from Puerto Rican consumers, to allocate positions to Puerto Ricans.

The ultimate success of these solutions depends, however, on our sense of community. Most Puerto Ricans live close together in the barrios and places to which we have become attached and consider "home." These sources of identity resemble the "municipios of origin" in the migrant generation. To the extent that we could revitalize this community experience along more contemporary lines, the chances improve for positive results. However, the mode of organization must be adapted to our circumstances in the United States, and to the characteristics of our population.

If our sense of community were somehow revitalized, it would make sense to have community economic development plans to guide teamwork and cooperative efforts among Puerto Ricans at the local level. Here we are not necessarily talking about "enterprise zones" and other policies depending primarily on the metropolitan establishment. The development plans suggested combine external funding with self-reliance in such activities as:

- strengthening the economic development functions of existing community service agencies (job training, placement, counseling, problem-solving and the like);
- organizing networks, similar to municipio-of-origin, but based on residence, friendship, lifestyle preferences or household condition;
- using the networks and a small staff of specialists for communication and assistance to people in their economic problems; for example:
- enabling people to become fully self-employed, obtaining credit or whatever arrangement is needed to expand business or conventionalize the hustle;
- getting people together to start a group project, perhaps by acquiring possession or management of a neighborhood business;
- redirecting certain forms of underground economy (e.g. gangs could provide a ready-made work team for housing rehabilitation);
- helping to start new businesses critically needed by the community: day-care centers, real estate agencies specializing in converting low-cost housing to cooperative ownership, and family health clinics;
- centralizing an exchange system for the barter of services that currently happens on a haphazard basis, limited to friendships and acquaintances;
- seeking ways for community people to extend their business to other places, where disposable income is in greater supply;
- encouraging networking among Puerto Ricans in major employment places—

possibly the formation or strengthening of work associations that might assume certain labor union functions, where unions are absent or ineffective;
- enabling a community business leadership to gain some measure of power over local job opportunities, market research and investments from outside;
- identifying major businesses benefitted by Puerto Rican consumers and establishing goals for employment in them.

In sum, what is proposed is a policy redirection that assumes capitalism as a given factor which cannot be currently eliminated in our particular circumstances. It builds on the experience of the Puerto Rican community, gives it control of economic development, and makes it the prime beneficiary of the results.

A comprehensive example regarding teenagers may help to clarify the approach suggested. Through the networks composed of Puerto Ricans, the chance for a group of youth to work temporarily is arranged at a major business either already having some Puerto Rican workers, or profiting from the community's patronage. The logic of "batch" employment is that it partly serves as a talent search for steady workers, and partly as a learning situation for people looking around for a career. With adequate preparation from school or a surrogate way of communicating how to succeed, chances are that the situational "chemistry" will lead to the hiring of some of the temporary workers, with provisions for skill advancement and on-the-job training. The other participants will likely gain the impression that they, too, can do it, in another, more appropriate work situation. All participants would take with them some evidence of credibility as workers who were employed, trusted and paid for their effort. The prospect is not as exciting as starting a Puerto Rican controlled business and some of the other ideas suggested. But it illustrates how a community could take an initiative and carry out an employment project, with the kind of empowerment proposed and a modest amount of resources.

Conclusion

Self-determination as a culturally distinct community with a sense of peoplehood is the basic principle underlying the four policy redirections suggested: community empowerment; fixing the public school mess; recasting the Puerto Rican image, and localized economic development plans. The social, political and economic context strongly influences what can be done. Thus, in the United States, self-determination ultimately requires some kind of compromise with the American system. Strategies successful in the case of Italians and Jews are worth considering in this regard. But for Puerto Ricans, a different kind of racism and discrimination urges us to not foresake our public recognition as a "minority" group. Therefore, elements of assimilation and the civil rights movement must be blended with pluralism in developing the most

workable policy. In so doing, the empowerment solution moves from what we have learned in past experiences to a perspective in which a genuinely Puerto Rican agenda has first priority among alternative considerations.

As a final comment I wish to say that this presentation has been academic in tone, but not necessarily in content. Its mode of expression differs from that of many other people who must be heard if empowerment is to become reality. In particular, we need to listen to Puerto Rica youth and incorporate their viewpoints, needs and wants into whatever policy will guide us from facts to action. Not only are the policies about and for them, but they are our most valued resource for the future. If only we could help them seek power, the problem of resources may someday become secondary to living out one's life in pride of being Puerto Rican!

The Puerto Rican Worker: Current Labor Market Status and Future Prospects

by Dr. Marta Tienda

The vast number of studies documenting the labor market position of Hispanic-origin workers (See Jaffe, Cullen and Boswell, 1980 and Tienda, 1981 for extensive literature reviews) reached three general conclusions about Hispanic workers. First, despite their common linguistic and cultural heritage, the Hispanic-origin population is quite heterogeneous with respect to several characteristics associated with labor market positions, including immigrant status, educational attainment, English proficiency, and place of residence. Second, of the three major Hispanic origin groups, Puerto Ricans are the most disadvantaged socially and economically, with poverty rates, levels of labor force participation, unemployment and earnings comparable to those of Native Americans and southern blacks. Although the dimensions of this disadvantage have been amply documented, few scholars have *explained* in detail the pervasiveness, causes and consequences of the extreme deprivation experienced by Puerto Ricans. Third, the persisting wage gaps between Hispanic and non-Hispanic white workers partly reflect differing stocks of human capital, but labor market conditions and discrimination appear to contribute to the disadvantaged economic status of Hispanic-origin workers, and Puerto Ricans, in particular.

Despite the general agreement on these three issues, there is more disagreement about the relative importance of differences in characteristics and discrimination in maintaining the disadvantaged labor market position of Puerto Ricans. This results because specific conclusions depend on the methods used to estimate these effects and because the observed differences in human capital between Puerto Rican and nonminority workers themselves result from pre-market discrimination. Consequently, the total effect of discrimination has probably been understated.

The empirical study of labor market experiences and outcomes served a useful function in calling the attention of legislators, community leaders and policy analysts to the problems faced by Hispanic workers—especially Mexicans and Puerto Ricans (see National Commission for Employment Policy, 1982). Nevertheless, the researchers contributing to the growing body of research have been less successful in translating their statistical evidence into concrete policy recommendations. This is unfortunate because the formulation of sound federal policies

to redress Puerto Ricans' economic disadvantages requires a solid research base. Although Puerto Ricans residing on the mainland comprise less than 1 percent of the total U.S. population (over 2 million people), the persistence of severe socioeconomic inequities at a time when other minority groups show signs of economic betterment justifies immediate attention by both researchers and policy analysts. My point of departure is that the socioeconomic disadvantages of Puerto Rican workers have political origins and thus must seek solutions in the political process.

Accordingly, the purpose of this paper is to document the current socioeconomic status of the adult Puerto Rican population residing on the U.S. mainland in 1980, and to explore the prospects for improving their labor market status in the near-term future. The paper is divided into three parts. To illustrate the political origins of the disadvantaged position of Puerto Rican workers, the opening historical vignette brings into focus the profound economic significance of past colonial status. Section II documents the current labor market position of Puerto Ricans using descriptive bivariate tabulations and multivariate analyses of participation rates and annual earnings. The final section reflects on general policy issues, such as formal schooling, vocational training and bilingual education, as well as more concrete concerns, such as the provisions of the Jobs Training Partnership Act (JTPA), and stressed the implications of these issues for improving the economic and social position of Puerto Rican workers. This section closes by suggeting policy strategies which Puerto Rican leadership might pursue to improve the labor market status of Puerto Ricans over the next four years.

I. Colonial Status and Puerto Rican Labor Mobility[2]

The colonized situation of Puerto Ricans on the mainland and the island is reflected in a labor experience of ongoing development and circulation of both workers and capital across imprecise national borders. United States hegemony on the island makes it difficult to define Puerto Rican society culturally or ethnically because Puerto Rican and North American identities are commingled. This commingling is dramatically illustrated by the massive migration that has shifted one-third of the island's population to the U.S. mainland since World War II.

These intense demographic and economic changes are largely the result of a decision to transform and develop Puerto Rico's plantation economy through a program of rapid industrialization. The apparent success of Operation Bootstrap (in operation from 1948–1965) hinged on several factors, including unrestricted migration between the mainland and the island. Even with the help of the burgeoning Commonwealth bureaucracy (employing three of ten workers by

1976), the new industrial order could not absorb the available workers, whose numbers rose steadily owing to population growth and a severe decline of the plantation sector. The resulting movement of young urban dwellers toward blue-collar jobs in the northeastern cities of the United States gained momentum in the 1950s; migration flows from Puerto Rico to New York rose from an annual average of 18,700 in the 1940s to 41,200 in the 1950s.

One would expect that the easy access of Puerto Ricans to the United States would, in comparison to other immigrants, facilitate their transition to mainland residents. In fact, the opposite occurred. Puerto Ricans were relegated to the lowest levels of the socioeconomic ladder from the start, and often fared much worse economically than blacks who migrated north. Two features distinguish their mainland experience and strongly influence their contemporary socioeconomic standing. The first is a disproportionate representation in the secondary labor market. (See Nelson and Tienda, forthcoming). Census data show that three labor categories--clerical and sales workers, unskilled and semi-skilled blue-collar workers, and service workers—account for approximately 70 percent of employed Puerto Rican men and 80 percent of employed women (see Table 5). The suburbanization of industry, coupled with inadequate mass transit, has further restricted opportunities for those tied to their central city neighborhoods, a situation which may have worsened for some during the 1970s, as the flight of industry from the Frostbelt to the lower-wage Sunbelt progressed, and as the flow of Colombian and Dominican immigrants to New York City increased (Sassen-Koob, In Press).

The second feature in the economic structuring process is the pattern of circular migration that emerged during the 1960s. In 1969–70 alone, 129,000 persons returned to Puerto Rico; by 1972, 14 percent of the island's population consisted of return migrants. The circular migration means that the island population and mainland community are two parts of one whole, a situation which distinguishes Puerto Ricans from other immigrants, and other minorities as well. It means that because elements of both cultures thrive on the mainland and the island, Puerto Ricans require a dual functional ability: adults must be bilingual, must be able to switch labor markets, and must cope with competing value systems.

Nevertheless, the image of a single, monolithic Puerto Rican community spanning the two locations is not entirely accurate. Members of the secod generation raised in New York City have been dubbed "Nuyoricans," indicating their simultaneous separateness from Puerto Rico and their connection to it. Being caught between two value systems, especially with respect to race and ethnicity, is a feature of life both on the mainland, and the island; in both places the cultural and socioeconomic duality produces ideological divisions that transcend those of class hierarchy.

In brief, the economic position of Puerto Ricans, particularly their low rates of labor force participation and high levels of welfare dependency, can be in-

terpreted as structurally determined by their colonial status (Nelson and Tienda, forthcoming), a pattern of migration that places Puerto Ricans between two worlds, and considerable residential and labor market segregation, all of which contribute to their marginality vis-a-vis the rest of the mainland society. Their marginal labor market status, documented in the following section, can be traced to the intergenerational transmission of disadvantages and to the persisting barriers to success in the educational and occupational spheres.

II. A Socioeconomic Profile: Evidence from Recent Census Data

The objective of this section is to document with recent census data the current labor market status of Puerto Rican workers in terms of labor force participation rates, occupational and industry location, and earnings. Throughout we emphasize comparisons between men and women, and between persons born on the mainland and island because of the marked differences between these groups, and so that policy initiatives might be targeted accordingly. For most comparisons, white native men and women serve as a referent of comparison, although occasional references are made to other Hispanics or blacks.

Socioeconomic Position

As noted in the Introduction, Puerto Ricans have been singled out as the most disadvantaged of the Hispanic-origin groups. In 1980 Puerto Ricans had the lowest household income levels of all Hispanics, averaging between $16,000 and $14,200 for the U.S. mainland- and island-born population, respectively. As Table 1 illustrates, in 1980 one-fourth of all Puerto Ricans born on the U.S. mainland lived on poverty level incomes, while 31 percent of those born on the island were poor. Another feature of the Puerto Rican population frequently associated with economic hardship is the high incidence of female household headship which ranged from 26 to 31 percent of all households whose heads were born on the mainland and island, respectively.

These socioeconomic circumstances are rooted in the severely disadvantaged labor market position of Puerto Rican workers. In 1980 Puerto Rican island- and mainland-born men participated in the labor force at a rate of 73 and 65 percent, but experienced unemployment rates ranging between 10 and 14 percent, respectively. These participation rates were between 10 and 13 percent below those of foreign- and native-born Mexican-origin workers, while the unemployment rates were between 1 and 5 percent points above those of Mexican men for the same period. A similar picture obtained for women, with Puerto Rican female labor force participation rates falling 8 to 20 percent points below those of Cuban or Mexican-origin women. Moreover, while island-born Puerto

Rican women experienced unemployment levels comparable to those of Mexican immigrant women, roughly 13 percent in 1980, these unemployment rates were substantially higher than those of Cuban immigrant women, which hovered around 7 percent. Differences in educational attainment alone cannot account for the observed differentials because Puerto Ricans are slightly better educated than Mexican workers.

Labor Force Participation

That the disadvantaged economic position of Puerto Ricans results from their poor labor market status is obvious. Less obvious is why their rates of labor force participation are so low, and unemployment levels so high in comparison to native white or other Hispanic workers. The data in Appendices 1 and 2 provide some perspective on the dimensions of variation in participation rates according to selected social and demographic characteristics of individual workers (Appendix 1) and the labor markets in which they seek jobs (Appendix 2).

Although most labor market analysts agree that both individual and market characteristics are important determinants of workers' employment outcomes, individual attributes receive the greatest amount of attention. Descriptive tabulations in Appendix 2 suggest that Puerto Rican men and women are more sensitive than native whites to labor market conditions. Note that participation rates for white men are relatively uniform across labor markets, despite varying unemployment rates, while the comparable participation rates for mainland- and island-born Puerto Rican men fluctuate notably. In fact the lowest rates of labor force participation by Puerto Ricans occur in the Northeast region, precisely the region where they are disproportionately concentrated. Evidence of lessened residential concentration of Puerto Ricans during the past decade (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1982) may be linked to the declining employment opportunities in the Northeast during the seventies, although there are no empirical studies establishing this association much less a causal relationship. At a minimum, policy makers and community leaders need to know whether those who moved were more or less successful in the labor market than those who did not, and how labor market characteristics, particularly unemployment rates and wage rates, influence the prospects for individual workers' economic success.

As a first step in evaluating the relative importance of individual and market characteristics in determining the labor force response of Puerto Ricans, we evaluated the participation decision in a multivariate framework. The individual variables used to estimate participation rates include demographic characteristics representing life cycle stages (age, marital status), human capital (English proficiency, education), and household constraints on labor market entry (for women, the presence of children under 6). In addition, to ascertain whether

residential changes influence labor force participation, we included a variable designating whether individuals moved between states, between the island and mainland or resided in the same place during the five years prior to the census. If geographical dispersion partly reflects a reponse to changing employment opportunities, we should observe higher labor force participation rates among the movers, other things being equal. Note, however, that the unadjusted participation rates shown in Appendix 1 provide only mixed support for this contention. Average unemployment rates and Hispanic concentration levels monitor the influence of labor market conditions on the propensity of Puerto Ricans to participate in the labor force.

Table 2 reports the results of our statistical analyses of the labor force participation. These data reveal that men in the prime working ages (25–54 years) were 12–15 percent more likely to be in the labor force in 1980 than young workers (16–24 years). Older workers participated in the labor force at a rate 8 percent below the rate of young workers, once other individual characteristics correlated with labor force participation were taken into account. Note that these differentials do not appear in the unadjusted descriptive tabulations provided in Appendix 1. A similar pattern of relationship between age and labor force participation emerged for women, except that the differences in participation levels between prime-aged women and young workers were lower than those observed for men; these ranged from 6 to 8 percent for mainland- and island-born women, respectively. Moreover, no significant differences emerged in the participation rates of young and old working women.

For almost all gender-birth place groups the absence of a spouse reduced by 12 to 20 percent the propensity of island- and mainland-born men to enter the labor market. For women, the effect of spouse absence was less pronounced. Spouse-absent women born on the island participated in the labor force about 3 percent less than their married counterparts who lived with their spouses. In contrast, Puerto Rican women whose spouses were absent in 1980 participated in the labor force at a rate of 4.5 percent *above* that of their married counterparts. Labor force participation rates of single men were dramatically lower than those of married men, ranging from 22 to 38 percent points below the rates of married men. Possibly this reflects differences in school enrollment rates which preclude continuous participation in the labor market.[3]

As expected the presence of children under 6 substantially depressed labor force participation rates of women, particularly those born on the mainland. Why the presence of young children should differentially affect the participation rates of mainland- and island-born women is unclear, but it may be related to varying co-residence patterns and exchange relationships whereby island-born women may rely more on the services of other friends and relatives to enable them to enter the labor market. Although this is sheer speculation at this point, it is an issue deserving further attention, as suggested by Tienda and Glass (1983)

and Tienda and Angel (1982).

Home bilingualism did not significantly influence the probability that Puerto Rican men or women participated in the labor market in 1980, provided that an adequate level of proficiency in English was attained. Poor English skills significantly lowered Puerto Ricans' labor force participation by 12 to 26 percent points compared to their English proficiency counterparts. These effects are above and beyond those associated with formal schooling.

Formal schooling significantly enhanced the likelihood that Puerto Ricans participated in the labor force in 1980. For the mainland-born Puerto Rican working-aged population, college graduation increased labor force participation rates by 27 percent for men and 46 percent for women. Obtaining some college or having completed high school increased labor force participation rates from 21 to 33 percent for mainland-born men and women, respectively. For island-born Puerto Ricans the effect of education on participation was also positive, but somewhat weaker (in that the increments in labor force participation rates for completion of various levels of schooling were smaller than the effect of formal education for mainland-born workers). For example, in 1980 a college educated man born on the island participated in the labor force at a rate 15 percent above his counterpart with less than eight years of completed school. In part these differential effects of schooling on labor force participation may reflect significant, but difficult to identify, differences in the content and/or quality of schooling available on the island and the mainland. Unfortunately, there is no way to investigate this question with census data. It is one requiring further scrutiny because education is a critical determinant of labor market success for all workers, and for minorities in particular.

Finally, as hypothesized, Puerto Ricans who moved between states during the five years preceding the 1980 Census participated in the labor force at higher rates than nonmovers—4 to 5 percent for men and women, respectively. However, this positive effect was confined to mainland-born individuals. For this group, a comparable effect did not emerge for moves between the island and the mainland between 1975 and 1980, probably because relatively few "Nuyoricans" lived on the island in 1975. Of those who did, even fewer moved back to the mainland between 1975 and 1980. Movement from the island to the mainland during the five years prior to the Census did not improve the labor force participation rates of the island-born population. In fact, women who moved from the island to the mainland between 1975 and 1980 participated in the labor force at a rate 6 pecent points below that of island-born women who did not move. This may reflect the adjustment problems all Puerto Ricans, but women in particular, face when attempting to enter the labor market under conditions of shrinking employment opportunities.

We note with great interest the strong and statistically significant effects of unemployment levels on the labor force participation probabilities of Puerto Rican

men and women. Among men, residence in areas where aggregate unemployment levels ranged from 6–8 percent decreased their labor force participation probability by roughly 5 percent.[4] For island-born men, the effects were somewhat weaker but in the same direction. Residing in areas where unemployment rates ranged from 6 percent or higher decreased their labor force participation probability by 4 percent. Mainland-born women were affected by high unemployment rates more than island-born women, but in all instances high unemployment lowered their labor force participation prospects.

There exists a widely shared view that the formation and maintenance of ethnic ghettos works against the socioeconomic integration of ethnic workers. Our analysis of Hispanic concentration in selected labor markets indicates that Puerto Rican men residing in areas where Hispanics comprised over 10 percent of the working-aged population participated in the labor force at a rate 3 to 8 percent higher than Puerto Rican men residing outside of ethnic ghettos. These effects are plausible if one believes that the existence of ethnic ghettos creates labor market positions in businesses owned and operated by ethnic entrepreneurs who, in turn, hire other ethnics of similar backgrounds. Good examples of ethnic enterprises are businesses that cater to ethnic tastes, such as record stores, restaurants, and grocery stores. There exists ample documentation that the Cuban population has formed an economic enclave in Miami, but there has been no study of the existence of similar economic arrangements among Puerto Ricans or Mexicans. The fact that high Hispanic concentration actually increases labor force participation suggests that this question may be worth pursuing in further research. At a minimum, results suggest that business and community leaders interested in enhancing the labor market position of Puerto Ricans should provide financial incentives to minority owned and operated businesses, particularly those that employ other minority workers.

In summary, most of our findings were consistent with our expectations, but there emerged several questions deserving additional attention by researchers. For example, it is unclear why the effect of single headship differs for mainland- and island-born Puerto Rican women. The issue should be pursued further because it bears policy implications concerning the provision of day care services for women who experience labor market constraints due to the loss of a male breadwinner. Knowing the existence of such differences between mainland- and island-born women can help decision makers target meager resources more effectively, but still leaves open the question as to why such differences emerge in the first place.

Second, the fact that education has a strong positive influence on labor force participation is encouraging, but the differential magnitude of the effects for mainland- and island-born Puerto Ricans also need further examination. If the content of education curricula differs greatly, the general skills acquired in the schools may not be directly transferable. This finding is policy relevant, but

may be too politically sensitive to pursue in the short run. Also, in light of the fact that the average educational attainment of Puerto Ricans is low—particularly among the island-born population—short term employment and training policy must focus on maintaining youth in school to enhance their longer term prospects for success in the U.S. labor market. This issue is pursued further in the concluding policy discussion.

Finally, the strong results for the effect of English proficiency on labor market behavior also suggests that language training programs should be maintained for individuals whose English ability limits their access to jobs. Investment in English language training programs is something that is both feasible and viable within a short timeframe, but such investments must be continued for long periods to ensure lasting benefits on the employment prospects of Puerto Rican workers.

More difficult problems to resolve are changes in unemployment levels which adversely affect Puerto Ricans. Appendix 2 indicates that Puerto Rican participation rates are more sensitive to area unemployment rates than are native-born whites. Since it is difficult to change or modify area unemployment rates in the short term, and since these levels usually reflect national and/or seasonal downturns in the economy, adversely affected workers might be assisted via retraining programs, particularly if they are displaced workers. These issues will be taken up again in the concluding section of this paper. Our next task involves a brief documentation of the nature of jobs held by Puerto Rican men and women and their associated economic rewards.

Occupation and Industry Structure

That Puerto Ricans participate unequally in the U.S. labor market is further indicated by their allocation in the occupational and industry structure. Table 3 shows that in comparison to white native-born men and women, Puerto Rican workers were disproportionately concentrated in lower white collar and blue collar service and production jobs. This is not to say that there are no Puerto Ricans in top level positions, but rather that they are severely underrepresented. Note, for example, that relative to native white men, Puerto Rican workers were half as likely to hold executive and managerial occupations in 1980. A more striking contrast emerged within the professional occupations, held by only 4 percent of Puerto Rican island-born men compared to over 10 percent of the native white men. At the opposite end of the occupational spectrum, roughly one-fifth of all island-born Puerto Rican workers operated machines, or assembled and inspected products, compared to roughly 10 percent of native white men. Furthermore, Puerto Rican workers were over twice as likely as native white men to work in service industries in 1980.

A similar picture emerged for women, except that in comparison to men, they tended to be relatively overrepresented in the lower status positions. The argu-

ment that minority women are doubly disadvantaged—because they are women and because they are minority—finds support in the 1980 census data, as well as in Tables 5 and 6, which present average annual earnings received by employed Puerto Rican women. Like their male counterparts, Puerto Rican women were severely underrepresented in the professional and executive/managerial occupations. What is distinctive about women is the concentration of island-born women in machine operation, assembly and inspecting occupations—jobs that are largely in the labor-intensive garment industry (see Table 4). Over one in every four island-born Puerto Rican working woman operated machines or assembled products in 1980, whereas the modal occupation for mainland-born women, as for native white women, were technical, sales and administrative occupations. Proportions of women holding low skill service jobs in 1980 ranged from 15 percent for Puerto Ricans to 17 percent for white women.

To be sure, the concentration of Puerto Rican women in machine operation and garment assembly occupations has much to do with the kinds of jobs available and traditionally held by women workers on the island, as well as the labor demands of the New York/New Jersey garment industries. The dominance of New York as a trading, financial and fashion center has meant that labor-intensive garment industries have flourished, as have retail establishments involved in the distribution of products to local, national and international markets. What is unfortunate about this situation from the standpoint of improving the labor market position of Puerto Rican women is that, with the internationalization of the garment industry in search of less expensive labor, many of the employment opportunities that served as the mainstay of the Puerto Rican female labor force in the past have declined substantially and will continue to do so unless some intervention strategies prevent this situation from materializing.

Sassen-Koob (In Press) has documented this situation well, and Waldinger (In Press) has further shown that many jobs in the garment industry are currently being filled by Dominican and Colombian immigrants. What the data in Table 4, which are based on a single time period, do not show, is the extent to which all Puerto Rican workers, but women in particular, have joined the growing corps of dislocated workers, as those industries where they have traditionally sought and found work move to other parts of the country or the world. When viewed in light of the low participation rates (which probably represent a large number of "discouraged workers," i.e., those who have stopped searching for work because they believe no jobs are available) and the high unemployment rates experienced by Puerto Ricans, a short-term policy strategy to improve the labor market status of Puerto Rican workers would seem to require training programs to channel workers into growing industries, and others to enhance their access to higher status occupations. For the latter, an emphasis on formal schooling, credentials through computer assisted instruction represents a short-term, cost-effective alternative.

Any policy initiatives designed to improve the labor market position of Puerto Rican workers would be short-sighted if they did not also take into account the much lower earnings that accompany their lower rates of labor force participation and higher unemployment rates. As Tables 5 and 6 show, in 1980 there existed substantial earnings differences between native white and Puerto Rican workers who were similarly employed occupationally, or who had similar educational levels, or whose proficiency in English was roughly comparable. Because patterns of labor supply (i.e., weeks worked per year, and average hours worked per week) vary considerably, especially among women workers who often prefer part-time employment when young children are present in the household, we have differentiated average annual earnings between full-time, year-round workers and all workers. This distinction enables more comparable appraisals of the earnings gaps between Puerto Rican and white workers. Since Puerto Ricans tend to work fewer hours and fewer weeks per year on the average, the contrasts based on full-time, year-round workers will understate the extent of wage gaps for each occupation and education category.

Although the level of aggregation of the occupational and educational categories does not permit precise inferences about wage differentials associated with exactly comparable occupations (that is, there still may be a tendency for Puerto Ricans to hold lower paying jobs within broad occupation groups), the results in Tables 5 and 6 show striking earnings gaps between Puerto Ricans and native whites. Note that besides being underrepresented in executive, managerial and professional occupations, Puerto Rican men holding such jobs on a full-time, year-round basis in 1980 earned between $6,000 and $9,000 less than similarly employed white men. Of course, these comparisons do not take into account differences in job tenure, training, experience, and other forms of human capital which may partly contribute to the observed gross earnings gaps. Nevertheless, even in those occupation groups where Puerto Ricans are relatively overrepresented, such as machine operators or the lower skill jobs of helpers and laborers, the earnings advantage of native whites in 1980 ranged from $2,000 to $4,000 on an average annual basis.

Among comparably educated workers, Puerto Rican men earned approximately $6,000 less than their white male counterparts. What is especially distressing about the earnings gaps by education levels is the evidence that the differentials between native white and Puerto Rican men *increase* rather than decrease at higher levels of completed schooling. This suggests either that discrimination against Puerto Ricans may be more intense among the more educated, and/or that the jobs attained by Puerto Rican college graduates are differentially allocated to professional level jobs that receive unequal compensation. The multivariate analysis reported in Tables 7 and 8 provides further insight on this question.

Compared to men, women's average annual earnings for each occupational and educational group were considerably lower in 1980. In fact, the gender gap

in earnings was so great that white women who worked on a full-time, year-round basis in 1980 earned less than island-born Puerto Rican men. Part of the gender gap in earnings results from intra-occupational job segregation—which results in women's allocation to the lower paying jobs. Nevertheless, the statistical tabulations provide rather stark proof of the severe hardships faced by Puerto Rican working women—even those who work on a full-time, year-round basis. That the earnings gaps between white and Puerto Rican working women are less pronounced than those of men does not justify complacency in redressing the existing ethnic and gender inequities.

There are several reasons for placing the extreme disadvantages faced by Puerto Rican women at the top of the policy agenda. First, their earnings levels are so low that they are, in many instances, not much higher than the stipends afforded by public assistance programs. Second, in the jobs where island-born Puerto Rican women are most concentrated—machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors—their average annual earnings are over $1600 below those of native white women who are similarly employed. For those women who must assume the full financial burden of their families $7,800 simply is an insufficient annual income, especially in high cost areas such as the New York/New Jersey SMSA. Finally, the rates of female labor force participation among Puerto Ricans tend to be so low, especially in comparison to native white or even Cuban-origin women, and their rates of household headship so high, that the disadvantaged labor market position of Puerto Rican women extends far into the social fabric of the entire community: their experiences at work affect the life chances of today's and tomorrow's generations.

Having stated the urgency of the matter, the policy process must be informed about what target areas are likely to produce the greatest impacts in the short run—that is, within the time frame of an administration. The following analysis of earnings determination provides some guidance about the monetary returns associated with changes in education, and the net earnings gap associated with Puerto Rican ethnicity.

Earnings Determination

The data in Tables 7 and 8 report the average earnings changes associated with each year of education, labor market experience, English ability, migrant status, birthplace, marital, health and family status, weeks worked, and two labor market characteristics. The coefficients represent approximate dollar returns associated with each unit change (or membership in categories of discrete variables) in the independent variables. Table 7 is based on an analysis of a combined subsample of native whites and Puerto Ricans where the former serve as a referent of comparison whereas the results in Table 8 are based only on the subsample of Puerto Ricans, where the mainland-born population serves

as a referent of comparison for the effect of Puerto Rican ethnicity.

That investment in education would help increase the earning potential of Puerto Rican workers is undeniable; each year of completed schooling is associated with an earnings increase of approximateiy $480, in 1979, on an average annual basis for men of Puerto Rican origin (see Table 8). For Puerto Rican women, the monetary payoff of each year of formal schooling is substantially lower, approximately $160. Each year of labor market experience was associated with increased annual earnings in 1979, $271 and $82 for men and women, respectively. This implies that investment in programs to keep Puerto Ricans in the labor market—one aimed at bringing their experience levels up to a par with those of native whites—should also contribute to closing the racial/ethnic earnings gaps.[5] Also, English training programs will improve Puerto Ricans' average annual earnings from $250 to $1024 relative to workers with little or no English skills.

Puerto Rican origin exerted a strong negative influence on average annual earnings relative to native white origin; the net "cost" of Puerto Rican origin in 1980 was $1803 and $3264 for mainland- and island-born men, respectively (Table 7). For women, the respective average annual "cost" of Puerto Rican origin was not statistically significant once other variables associated with earnings inequality were taken into account. When native whites were not used as the standard of comparison, there persisted a substantial liability for island birth. When compared to their otherwise similar stateside-born counterparts, Puerto Rican men born on the island earned $642 less in 1980. Average annual earnings differences for mainland- and island-born women were trivial once differences in individual and labor market characteristics were held constant.

The observed and estimated earnings disadvantage of the island-born male labor force could reflect the more limited transferability of labor market skills obtained on the island, and the adjustment problems associated with integration into the mainstream on the mainland male. The fact that recent male migrants from the island had substantially lower earnings than male Puerto Rican workers who did not move during the five years preceding the Census suggests the need for a resettlement assistance program to facilitate the attainment of economic self-sufficiency by recent migrants. Moreover, since both the island and mainland-born workers are equally full-fledged citizens of the United States, an adjustment or resettlement assistance program, somewhat akin to that provided to recent refugees, might help improve the labor market experiences of recent arrivals from the island in the short term. That Puerto Rican origin should continue its strong association with lower earnings in 1979, well over a decade after the enactment of legislation prohibiting discrimination in the workplace speaks to the need for more effective policies to ensure equal pay for equal work. Unfortunately, like the anti-discrimination legislation, such policies are difficult to enforce, and under the current administration, difficult to legislate.

Although health status is not often given high priority on employment and

training agendas, our estimates indicate that workers with no work-disabling conditions earned between $140 and $1082 more, on an average annual basis, than their counterparts with work-limiting handicaps. This source of discrimination coupled with that based on race may substantially augment the handicaps experienced by Puerto Rican workers, but men in particular. A short-term strategy to ameliorate these consequences would begin with an investigation of the prevalence of work-limiting conditions among Puerto Ricans, and continue with the implementation of a set of policies to compensate disabled workers.

Residence in areas of high Hispanic concentration reduced the average annual earnings of Puerto Rican workers, but their concentration in high wage areas could serve to improve the income prospects of Puerto Rican workers, provided that they have access to high wage jobs and provided that they benefit from employment in enterprises owned and/or operated by other Hispanics. Ethnic concentration of labor markets is not an easily manipulated determinant of individual earnings, however, wage rates can be subjected to varying levels of government regulation. This however, implies a long-term strategy for improving the labor market position of Puerto Rican workers, and one requiring an administration willing to impose federal wage regulations on the private sector and willing to protect the interests of disadvantaged minority workers. Such strategies are less appealing to advocates of laissez-faire economic policies such as those implemented by the Reagan administration.

In summary, the analysis of earnings determination among Puerto Ricans highlights the importance of education, labor market experience and English proficiency as potential avenues to increase their economic position, especially for the men. Although the Federal government has never endorsed policies which make geographic movement mandatory, evidence that interstate movers experienced a net gain, albeit modest, in annual earnings relative to nonmovers, and that recent island-mainland moves resulted in a substantial[6] loss of earnings relative to nonmovers again suggests that a resettlement program to assist recent migrants integrate themselves in the U.S. mainland labor market might be in order. The U.S. government has provided such assistance to Cuban refugees in the past and Southeast Asian refugees more recently. Against this background it would seem entirely appropriate if not mandatory to assist Puerto Ricans who are U.S. citizens in similar ways. These issues are developed in the final section.

III. Policy Recommendations for the Near Term Future

Our central question about how to seek political solutions to redress the severely disadvantaged labor market position of Puerto Rican workers has profitted from the analyses of labor force participation and earnings determination. One clear message is that the priority goal of any short term policy strategy must be to increase the labor force participation rates of Puerto Rican workers.

and to lower their unemployment rates. In this endeavor, several target areas suggested themselves, but the obvious areas for intervention strategies are the individual and family characteristics of Puerto Ricans which influence employability. Although improving the educational levels of Puerto Ricans involves a long term policy strategy, the fact that limited English proficiency exerted a strong negative effect on their labor force participation responses indicates that one short-term policy strategy that could improve the employability of Puerto Ricans is a comprehensive language training program. Another would involve remedial education focused around the transferability of general educational skills and job search skills between the island and the mainland. A computer-assisted instruction program might provide an efficient short-term strategy for achieving these goals.

Such policy thrusts should find support from the current administration as well as any more liberal one that might follow. Support for this claim is found in the specific provisions of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) which offers a framework for improving the labor market position of Puerto Ricans (see Bach and Tienda, 1983). Section 203(a)(2) of JTPA earmarks funds to overcome barriers to employment resulting from limited English language proficiency and from inadequate educational credentials, even for individuals who are not economically disadvantaged. Given the low average educational levels of Puerto Ricans, particularly the older cohorts born on the island, support for programs that aim to upgrade the educational, and skill levels, of Puerto Rican workers including English proficiency, should rank highest on policy agendas. Despite the existance of a Federal employment policy, unless the Puerto Rican leadership assumes a strong and concerted effort to ensure that eligible workers participate in reskilling and retraining programs, the legislated authority for remedial training will do little to improve either the employability or the earnings of Puerto Ricans.

In the short term, "empowerment" can only mean taking full advantage of what policy opportunities are in place; over the long term, "empowerment" also should entail creative solutions to unique problems, redressing long-term social inequities, and securing the collective resources to revitalize the Puerto Rican community. Such revitalization can begin in the short term by focusing on the youth population who represent the future generation of workers. Because of the young age structure of Puerto Ricans, and because of the extremely high drop-out rates of Puerto Rican high school students (Nelson, 1984), this set of provisions could engage greater numbers of Puerto Ricans by default, but as in the case of low-skill workers, will not do so without strategies for pressure by the Puerto Rican leadership. Assuring that Puerto Rican youth are actually served by the funds earmarked for disadvantaged youth programs is a responsibility the Puerto Rican leadership must assume.

Women comprise another group of interest. Although JTPA does not target

special programs for women, the various provisions refer to women as the type of group for which services should be rendered. Section 451 (b)(5), for example, mentions programs designed to serve the specialized needs of women as appropriate candidates for nationally-administered initiatives. Most provisions of JTPA explicitly recognize women as an essential group of workers and a major source of labor market change. Our analysis of the 1980 Census data highlighted the negative influence of the presence of young children on the labor force participation and earnings of Puerto Rican women. At a minimum, this finding suggests the need for day care services for those mothers who want to work but are unable to do so. Such investments will go a long way toward reducing the levels of welfare dependency among Puerto Rican single mothers while also enhancing their productive contributions to national output.

A final group of workers targeted by the JTPA legislation are dislocated workers—individuals who lose their jobs because of declining industries or the migration of firms to more favorable labor environments. Although this stipulation appears to be straightforward, the matter of determining who is a dislocated worker can be quite complicated. In a subtle but profound way, JTPA ignores issues that arise from the specific demand for Puerto Rican workers in particular industries and regional labor markets. Based on evidence of different unequal rewards for education between Puerto Ricans and white workers, one must question whether employers require a different array of skills from Puerto Rican workers. Our results suggest that this is the case. Moreover, evidence of high concentration of Puerto Ricans in low-skill occupations requires further information about how demand factors operate in recruiting island- and mainland-born workers for specific industries, and whether special training programs might not be designed to redress these inequities.

It is a matter of political economy—not just philosophy—whether one approves or disapproves of JTPA's thrust toward reducing the role of the Federal government in designing and administering the nation's employment and training activities. JTPA means an increase in the power of certain groups—usually the dominant majority business community—to determine *which clients* are served and *what types of programs* are offered. Congress targeted only a few groups—youth, dislocated workers, individuals with educational and English handicaps—to be served by JTPA programs. The critical question becomes: which groups will be served by state and local interests in those areas where Puerto Ricans are disproportionately concentrated? And, more importantly, *who will decide?*

The Puerto Rican leadership should take note of the fact that the implementation of employment and training policy at the local level raises serious questions as to whether Puerto Ricans will be served, irrespective of whether they qualify under the provisions for youth, dislocated workers or education and English programs. The Job Training Partnership Act allows Private Industry Councils to exercise control over the type of skills current or potential employees

will learn. Section 107 (d) requires that:

> The administrative entity (service provider) shall not fund any occupational skills training program *unless* the level of skills provided in the program are in accordance with guidelines established by the Private Industry Council. *(Emphasis added.)*

If it is true that Puerto Ricans comprise a low-wage, unprotected labor supply that is particularly attractive to certain industries precisely because of their low skill characteristics, why should Private Industry Councils composed by the local business community seek to upgrade their educational credentials, or to retrain dislocated workers? In a sense, the legislation asks local service providers to train a workforce that is employed largely because it is untrained. In other words, by investing human capital resources in Puerto Rican youth, women and dislocated workers, as well as Puerto Ricans with low levels of proficiency in English or completed schooling, private industry representatives would be agreeing to upgrade a labor supply that conveys significant economic advantages to firms in their local areas because it is untrained.

Government-assisted employment and training programs have always sought to change conditions of individuals' work and to redress persistent social inequities that would not be resolved without special assistance. Both premises clash with an administrative structure that allows employers to determine what skills should be taught and which groups should be served. In terms of demand issues, JTPA encourages the status quo, and probably results in the neglect of the employment and training needs not only of Puerto Ricans, but other minority workers as well. This situation should not prevail in the '80s. At a minimum, Puerto Ricans should receive the training and retooling for which they are eligible.

Of course, the decentralized structure of JTPA does not rely completely on the power and interests of the business community. Instead, a minority coalition representing a diverse range of local agencies participates in the planning process. In many ways, the process is structured so that the determination of which groups get served becomes a matter of local advocacy. This arrangement usually results in a highly varied and unequal pattern of program delivery corresponding to the interests of the more powerful and active groups. However, through selective and planned intervention in the design of program delivery, Puerto Ricans can benefit more from JTPA than they are presently.

Under advocacy relationships, a major question becomes, *who* represents *what* interests? *Specifically, who will represent Puerto Ricans?* In this political economic competition, Puerto Ricans will perform poorly unless special efforts are undertaken to enhance their representation on the Private Industrial Councils and unless Puerto Rican interests and concerns—especially increasing labor force participation rates, decreasing unemployment levels, and securing training for access to better paying, higher status jobs—are brought to the forefront.

That this is a long term agenda cannot be denied, but its eventual achievement requires building a solid foundation for the participation of Puerto Ricans in the political decisions that govern their economic status. This is an urgent need that must be attended to in the short run. Availing Puerto Rican workers of the resources locked in place by the current JTPA legislation also is a reasonable short-term goal that can and must be achieved immediately. Failure to do so will result in further intergenerational perpetuation of inequality.

NOTES

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[2]This section borrows from Candace Nelson and Marta Tienda, "The Structure of Hispanic Ethnicity: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives" to appear in Ethnic and Racial Studies.

[3]Although these effects should be captured by the age variable, it is possible that single men, who may have fewer family responsibilities, may not work due to enrollment in formal education or vocational training programs.

[4]To appreciate fully the magnitude of this effect, recall that labor force participants include those who are employed and at work as well as those who are unemployed and looking for work. The magnitude of the effect of unemployment rates on the employment prospects of Puerto Rican workers would be even greater if the dependent variable were restricted to the subset of employed workers.

[5]In a strict sense, the experience term captures the effects of age because the census data does not contain precise information about time actually spent in the labor market. That this variable partly captures the effect of the younger age composition of Puerto Ricans, compared to native whites, can be appreciated by comparing the dollar coefficients for this term in Table 7 (which is based on a pooled sample including native whites) and Table 8 (which is based on the sample of Puerto Ricans only). Because labor supply and work continuity patterns differ between these groups, the pure experience and age effects cannot be properly disentangled with these data.

[6]The dollar amount is substantial when compared to the average earnings of Puerto Rican workers as a whole, and low-skill workers in particular.

TABLE 1

Selected Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Puerto Rican Civilian Population Aged 16 and Over, 1980

	Mainland Born	Island Born
Education[a]	12.0	9.1
Male LFPR[b]	64.6	72.7
Female LFPR	46.9	36.6
Male Unemployment Rate	13.9	9.9
Female Unemployment Rate	12.6	12.7
Mean Household Income ('000)	16.6	14.2
% Female Households	24.3	23.4
% Below Poverty	25.5	31.2
(N)	(19,078)	(43,677)

Source: 1980 PUMS 5% A Files.

[a]Refers to individuals aged 25 and over

[b]Labor Force Participation Rate

TABLE 2

Adjusted Labor Force Participation Differentials[1] (In Percent)

	Mainland Born		Island Born	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Characteristic	Percent[b]	Percent[c]	Percent[d]	Percent[e]
Age				
25-54 years	.147	.060	1.24	.077
55-64 years	-.084	.002	-.083	.055
Marital Status				
Married, spouse absent	-.196	.045	-.118	-.031
Other	-.380	-.060	-.225	-.051
English Spoken at Home	.015	.011	-.012	-.021
English Ability Fair	-.033	-.063	-.036	-.064
Poor/None	-.152	-.256	-.119	-.224
Education				
8-11 years	.006	.006	.030	.034
12 years	.217	.304	.133	.188
Some College	.211	.336	.109	.275
College Graduate	.273	.456	.148	.367
Mover				
Interstate	.049	.036	-.001	.013
Island-mainland or country-mainland	.085	-.008	-.006	-.064
Children under 6		-.171		-.098
Unemployment Level				
High (8 Percent)	-.054	-.050	-.041	-.028
Medium (6-7 percent)	-.055	-.064	-.039	-.035
Percent Hispanic High				
(10 percent)	.036	-.003	.033	-.010
Medium (4-9 percent)	.072	.030	.082	.070

Source: 1980 PUMS 5% A Files

[a]The analysis is based on a logistic regression, an appropriate statistical procedure when the dependent variable is a dichoctomy, as in this instance, in or out of the labor force. These results are available from the authors. Logit coefficients can be easily transformed into probability increments, which are more easily interpreted. These adjusted probabilities are superior to the gross participation rates reported in the agenies because the effects are net of the set of individual and structural variables correlated with labor force participation.

[b]Evaluated P = .645; [c]Evaluated P = .471; [d]Evaluated P = .763; [e]Evaluated P = .392; [f]Not entered for men.

TABLE 3

Occupational Distribution of Puerto Rican and Non-Hispanic White Men and Women

Occupation	White Native Born		Puerto Rican Mainland Born		Puerto Rican Island Born	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Executive Administrative, Managerial	11.9	6.7	6.0	4.4	5.8	3.3
Professional	10.3	13.9	6.9	8.5	3.9	7.2
Technicians and Related	12.6	15.6	10.5	16.7	6.0	9.1
Administrative Support	6.3	30.7	14.8	39.7	8.6	23.5
Service-Household and Protective	2.3	1.2	4.1	1.1	2.6	1.5
Service – Other	6.4	17.1	14.2	14.9	15.8	14.7
Farming, Forestry Fishing	4.8	1.1	1.6	0.5	3.0	0.6
Mechanics and Repairers	6.8	0.3	5.1	0.2	5.5	0.3
Construction Trades	8.8	0.3	4.3	0.2	4.2	0.2
Precision Production	5.8	1.5	4.3	1.8	7.0	3.9
Machine Operators, Assemblers, and Inspectors	9.6	8.4	11.3	8.7	20.6	28.5
Transportation and Material Moving	7.4	0.9	6.7	0.6	7.8	0.9
Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, Helpers, and Laborers	6.9	2.3	10.0	2.8	9.3	6.2
Total	99.9	100.0	99.8	100.1	100.1	99.9
(N)	(21379)	(17880)	(6492)	(6135)	(15961)	(11409)

Source: 1980 PUMS 5% A Files

TABLE 4

Industry Distribution of Puerto Rican and Non-Hispanic White Men and Women

Characteristic	White, Native Born		Puerto Rican, Mainland Born		Puerto Rican, Island Born	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Mining Construction	16.9	3.2	7.2	1.3	7.6	1.1
Manufacturing—Nondurable goods	8.6	8.0	9.6	9.1	14.5	22.8
Manufacturing—Durable Goods	18.4	8.3	13.6	8.6	22.5	16.3
Transportation, Communications, Other Public Utilities	8.9	3.9	9.4	3.6	8.3	2.7
Wholesale Trade—Durable Goods	3.0	1.2	2.0	1.3	1.7	1.0
Wholesale Trade—Nondurable Goods	2.5	1.4	2.5	1.6	2.5	1.7
Retail Trade	14.2	22.4	18.6	20.5	13.3	11.2
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	4.1	8.2	6.3	11.2	5.4	5.4
Business and Repair Services	4.5	3.5	6.9	4.3	4.8	2.8
Personal Services	1.6	4.5	2.5	3.2	2.9	4.9
Entertainment and Related Services	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.2	0.7
Public Administration	5.2	4.5	5.9	6.7	4.4	4.9
Experienced, Unemployed[a]	0.2	0.3	1.0	0.8	0.7	1.3
Total	100.1	100.0	100.1	100.2	99.9	100.0
(n)	(21420)	(17930)	(6557)	(6182)	(16081)	(11560)

Source: 1980 PUMS 5% A Files

[a]Not classified by industry

TABLE 5

Median Earnings[a] of Puerto Rican and Non-Hispanic White Men in the Experienced Civilian Labor Force by Occupation, Education, and English Ability for Full and Part Time Workers

Characteristic	White Native Born		Puerto Rican Mainland Born		Puerto Rican Island Born	
	Full Time, Year Round	All Workers	Full Time Year Round	All Workers	Full Time, Year Round	All Workers
Occupation						
Executive, Administrative, Managerial	$26,295	$23,468	$19,833	$16,009	$16,913	$14,429
Professional	25,615	21,663	18,846	13,494	20,460	15,186
Technicians and Related	20,981	17,075	15,147	9,649	15,030	11,407
Administrative Support	17,614	13,374	12,739	7,840	13,319	10,202
Service-Household and Protective	17,239	13,401	14,168	9,463	14,288	11,677
Service-Other	12,246	6,374	10,155	4,883	10,768	7,629
Farming, Forestry, Fishing	14,711	10,019	13,568	4,782	9,705	8,104
Mechanics and Repairers	17,080	14,612	15,650	10,895	14,432	11,185
Construction Trades	18,605	14,054	13,699	9,144	13,852	9,823
Precision Production	18,902	16,797	15,437	10,673	14,318	11,348
Machine Operators, Assemblers and Inspectors	15,918	12,669	12,028	7,554	11,974	9,184
Transportation and Material Moving	17,887	14,341	12,799	8,452	13,479	10,088
Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, Helpers, and Laborers	13,827	7,703	11,256	4,988	11,637	7,725
(N)[b]	(13161)	(21379)	(2764)	(6492)	(8715)	(15961)
Education						
0-8 years	$14,859	$9,237	$10,982	$ 3,826	$11,572	$ 6,819
9-11 years	16,030	8,543	11,050	3,216	12,029	6,923
12 years	17,605	13,600	13,556	7,595	13,713	9,707
Some College	19,605	14,318	15,171	8,312	15,469	10,370
College Graduate	26,515	21,894	20,020	14,252	20,866	15,374
(N)	(13232)	(22857)	(2778)	(8630)	(8729)	(18984)
Education						
0-8 years	$14,859	$ 9,237	$10,982	$ 3,826	$11,572	$ 6,819
9-11 years	16,030	8,543	11,050	3,216	12,029	6,923
12 years	17,605	13,600	13,556	7,595	13,713	9,707
Some College	19,605	14,318	15,171	8,312	15,469	10,370
College Graduate	26,515	21,894	20,020	14,252	20,866	15,374
(N)	(13232)	(22857)	(2778)	(8630)	(8729)	(18984)
English Ability						
Good	$19,886	$14,297	$14,587	$ 6,909	$14,709	$ 9,663
Fair	16,920	11,986	12,231	4,775	12,674	8,362
Poor	18,928	12,379	10,227	3,717	10,837	5,753
(N)	(13174)	(22758)	(2775)	(8623)	(8724)	(18970)

Source: 1980 PUMS 5% A Files

[a]Includes only individuals who were in the labor force in 1979 and had positive earnings.
[b]Ns are smaller because these tabulations are based on the subset of individuals in the labor force at the time of the Census.

TABLE 6

Median Earnings[a] of Puerto Rican and Non-Hispanic White Women in the Experienced Civilian Labor Force by Occupation, Education, and English Ability for Full and Part Time Workers (In Dollars)

Characteristic	White Native Born		Puerto Rican Mainland Born		Puerto Rican Island Born	
	Full Time, Year Round	All Workers	Full Time Year Round	All Workers	Full Time, Year Round	All Workers
Occupation						
Executive, Administrative, Managerial	$14,040	$10,431	$14,596	$10,521	$13,360	$ 9,790
Professional	14,481	9,126	12,586	7,507	14,544	9,224
Technicians and Related	10,891	5,181	9,920	3,393	10,424	4,605
Administrative Support	10,516	6,877	10,006	5,857	10,501	6,416
Service-Household and Protective	8,341	2,781	9,811	2,559	8,794	3,165
Service-Other	7,610	3,313	8,816	2,962	8,536	4,323
Farming, Forestry, Fishing	6,393	2,795	4,325	1,674	7,146	3,146
Mechanics and Repairers	12,590	9,322	11,268	7,242	10,618	7,200
Construction Trades	16,697	9,199	18,525	4,226	8,571	3,140
Precision Production	13,144	8,269	9,661	4,583	8,555	5,410
Machine Operators, Assemblers and Inspectors	9,513	6,042	8,518	4,063	7,838	4,530
Transportation and Material Moving	11,179	5,024	8,634	4,894	8,126	4,307
Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, Helpers, and Laborers	9,961	4,915	7,163	2,456	8,545	4,197
(N)[b]	(6439)	(17880)	(1785)	(6135)	(3870)	(11409)
Education						
0-8 years	$ 8,609	$ 2,124	$ 8,264	$ 1,394	$ 8,098	$ 1,608
9-11 years	9,025	2,495	7,598	1,055	8,563	1,929
12 years	10,192	4,565	10,000	3,870	9,840	3,649
Some College	11,749	5,502	10,755	4,433	10,883	4,596
College Graduate	14,981	8,360	13,954	7,385	15,085	8,128
(N)	(6459)	(23593)	(1785)	(9606)	(3871)	(22469)
English Ability						
Good	$11,368	$ 4,826	$10,421	$ 3,473	$10,632	$3,863
Fair	11,869	4,165	9,431	2,073	9,384	2,890
Poor	9,869	4,285	9,062	1,778	7,859	1,361
(N)	(6441)	(23593)	(1785)	(9606)	(3870)	(22469)

Source: 1980 PUMS 5% A Files

[a]Includes only individuals who were in the labor force in 1979 and had positive earnings.
[b]Ns are smaller because these tabulations are based on the subset of individuals in the labor force at the time of the Census.

TABLE 7

Earnings Determination of Puerto Rican Men and Women (Standard Errors in Parentheses)

Characteristic	Men	Women
Individual Level		
Education	763.6	234.4
	(12.7)	(6.0)
Experience	477.0	112.3
	(9.8)	(3.9)
(Experience)^2	−7.0	−1.5
	(0.2)	(0.1)
English Ability		
Good	5.7	−32.9
	(146.5)	(58.8)
Fair	−532.8	−294.22
	(152.3)	(61.7)
Mover		
Interstate	68.1	184.6
	(84.6)	(36.9)
Island-mainland or other country-mainland	−7.2	130.0
	(217.2)	(91.8)
Puerto Rican Mainland	−1803.0	38.4
	(120.8)	(53.2)
Puerto Rican Island	−3264.3	17.9
	(110.0)	(49.1)
If Married	1876.0	−415.8
	(89.0)	(35.2)
If Healthy	2122.1	179.1
	(129.5)	(54.8)
Weeks Worked	218.5	175.2
	(2.0)	(0.7)
Children Under 6	--a	216.6
	--	(49.7)
Labor Market Level		
Percent Hispanic		
High	−698.9	163.6
	(102.9)	(45.5)
Medium	481.3	135.2
	(107.7)	(47.7)
Average Area Wage Rate	1109.7	344.3
	(47.9)	(21.2)
Constant	−21429.2	−6795.3
R2	.491	.577
(N)	(50741)	(55668)

Source: 1980 PUMS 5% A Files

[a]Not entered.

TABLE 8

Earnings Determination of Puerto Rican Men and Women (Standard Errors in Parentheses)

Characteristic	Men	Women
Individual Level		
Education	480.2	159.8
	(12.4)	(6.3)
Experience	271.0	82.0
	(9.7)	(4.3)
(Experience)^2	-3.4	-1.0
English Ability		
Good	1024.1	257.2
	(111.5)	(51.2)
Fair	278.2	-83.2
Mover		
Interstate	135.9	116.9
	(83.4)	(40.2)
Island-mainland or other country-mainland	-299.4	102.2
	(164.4)	(78.6)
Puerto Rican Island	-641.8	-10.8
	(92.0)	(45.4)
If Married	1282.9	-144.1
	(84.2)	(37.1)
If Healthy	1081.7	140.1
	(124.6)	(56.9)
Weeks Worked	209.3	170.5
	(1.9)	(0.8)
Children Under 6	-[a]	191.3
	-	(50.7)
Labor Market Level		
Percent Hispanic		
High	-943.2	-25.5
	(108.5)	(54.2)
Medium	296.5	-15.5
	(117.0)	(58.8)
Average Area Wage Rate	520.6	226.7
	(57.1)	(28.4)
Constant	-13068.0	-4724.9
R2	.526	.626
(N)	(27614)	(32075)

Source: 1980 PUMS 5% A Files

[a]Not entered.

Appendix 1

Labor Force Participation Rates of Puerto Rican and Non-Hispanic White Men and Women by Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics

Characteristics	White Native Born		Puerto Rican Mainland Born		Puerto Rican Island Born	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Age						
16-24	69.8	60.4	52.9	41.6	59.0	34.1
25-54	93.8	63.0	83.4	56.5	83.0	41.9
55-64	71.9	40.6	68.1	45.6	60.8	29.1
Marital Status						
Married, Spouse present	91.3	53.1	88.6	51.8	84.6	43.0
Married, Spouse absent	82.6	70.0	77.4	53.2	73.2	34.9
Other	69.3	67.2	50.5	42.5	58.5	35.6
Home Language						
Spanish[a]	79.2	56.2	62.8	45.2	76.1	38.7
English	84.4	58.7	69.4	53.7	78.8	48.6
English Ability						
Good	84.3	58.7	66.4	49.6	79.8	48.7
Fair	78.4	45.2	57.6	37.2	77.5	41.8
Poor/none	77.1	61.8	52.1	31.1	68.0	25.4
Education						
0-8 years	69.5	33.2	52.6	27.4	61.1	27.5
9-11 years	70.5	43.9	48.5	26.6	72.2	32.3
12 years	88.5	59.9	74.2	56.6	84.0	49.9
Some college	84.9	64.6	74.4	60.0	81.5	58.6
College graduate	92.8	73.5	84.5	72.9	86.2	69.1
Mover						
Interstate	86.5	61.7	69.9	49.5	77.2	40.2
Island-mainland or other country-mainland	85.3	43.4	71.5	46.3	71.4	33.1
Else (non-movers)	82.6	55.1	55.3	44.2	77.0	38.7
(N)[b]	(22857)	(23593)	(8630)	(9606)	(18984)	(22469)

Source: 1980 PUMS 5% A Files

[a]For whites, language other than English.

[b]Because the migration data was obtained only for a 2.5% sample, the number of observations for computations involving movers is approximately half.

Appendix 2

Labor Force Participation Rates of Puerto Rican and Non-Hispanic White Men and Women by Labor Market Characteristics

Characteristic	White Native Born		Puerto Rican Mainland Born		Puerto Rican Island Born	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
State/Region						
New York	82.0	60.8	59.9	42.4	73.1	34.7
New Jersey	85.5	61.2	65.3	50.1	80.1	42.2
Illinois	85.8	59.1	66.7	48.7	81.2	47.6
Northeast	83.1	59.7	60.6	43.6	74.4	36.3
Northcentral	86.0	58.7	69.4	51.6	80.4	46.4
South	83.0	57.5	75.4	57.5	82.6	49.2
West	84.9	59.2	77.7	60.7	81.6	51.7
Area Unemployment Levels[a]						
High (8 percent)	82.4	53.6	65.1	47.9	75.6	40.0
Medium (6-7 percent)	84.6	58.5	62.2	44.3	75.2	37.1
Low (2 percent)	84.9	61.6	71.3	55.9	79.5	45.6
Area Percent Hispanic[a]						
High (10 percent)	84.5	60.5	63.4	45.1	75.4	36.5
Medium (3-9 percent)	85.2	59.4	68.9	51.5	81.6	46.5
Low (2 percent)	83.9	58.0	63.3	49.0	72.8	39.0
(N)	(22857)	(23593)	(8630)	(9606)	(18984)	(22469)

Source: 1980 PUMS 5% A Files

[a]**Computed over SMSAs or remainder state non-metro areas. SMSA boundaries have been adjusted to make them as comparable as possible with those of the B file where all SMSAs are identified. The total number of areal units for these computations is 414.**

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AN AMERICAN CHALLENGE

As we attempt to engage the leadership of the nation in a meaningful discussion of the future of our community this dialogue must occur with an awareness of the profound changes which have occurred in the '80s.

Since the 1980 presidential election there have been fundamental changes in the social, economic and political climate of this nation. The role of the federal government in promoting upward mobility through "ladder of opportunity" programs has been considerably reduced. As opposed to the 1960s and 1970s when the federal government was committed to pursuing a social agenda, e.g. civil rights, educational opportunity, consumer protection, medical care delivery—a new agenda was put into place emphasizing a reduced role for government and putting more emphasis on private sector effort and commitment.

The support received for a reduced federal role in setting a social policy agenda for this nation poses a challenge to the institutional infrastructure of minority communities. As the Ford Foundation noted in its report "Civil Rights, Social Justice and Black America":

> Reductions in federal funding threatens the viability of most of the (civil rights) organizations, which, as a result, must devote increasing time and energy to raising funds from the private sector. The private funding pie is, however, limited, and that fact tends to result in organizational rivalries. Moreover, in recent years some civil rights organizations have lost a degree of independence in setting program priorities by emphasizing work in areas for which federal financial assistance was available. The withdrawal of federal funding at a time when new initiatives are called for obliges these organizations to develop new program priorities with no assurances that the funds will be available.

The Puerto Rican community and its human service and advocacy organizations are not immune to the kind of limitations imposed by a changed social agenda. Given the fragility of many of these organizations, their ability to defend the best interests of the Puerto Rican community will certainly be most affected.

Added to this increased conservative mood are fundamental changes in the structure of the economy. The most pivotal of these structural changes is the continuing shift of the American economy from a manufacturing to a non-manufacturing base; the growing importance of trade and investment in the economy and the quickening pace of technological change. The changes are already evident. It is already clear, for example, that robotization will do for

manufacturing what mechanization did for agriculture: increase productivity and reduce the number of jobs.

This structural change of the economy to a low-employment manufacturing base and a more sophisticated high-employment base has important implications for our communities. As indicated by U.S. Census data, Puerto Ricans are disproportionately represented in the secondary labor market with three categories—clerical and sales workers, unskilled and semi-skilled blue-collar workers, and service workers—accounting for approximately 70 percent of employed Puerto Rican men and 80 percent of employed women. The continuing structural changes in the economy essentially mean that many of these jobs will be eliminated in the future. Aiding displaced workers to develop new skills and find new jobs must, therefore, be a top priority item in the social agenda of our community.

In view of these social and economic realities Puerto Rican communities are faced with marked challenges to their future growth and development. NPRC, as an organization founded to foster the social, political and economic development of Puerto Ricans throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, believes these challenges require imaginative responses from our membership. Only by recognizing these challenges and addressing them with meaningful responses will we be able to create the synergism necessary to promote our future socioeconomic development. We also recognized that Puerto Ricans are not alone in their struggles, but share many concerns with other minority groups: other Hispanics, Blacks, women. We believe in the effectiveness of coalition building for unified action on common problems.

A main challenge facing our community during the balance of this decade is to create a broader base of support for Puerto Rican non-profit human service organizations. In the past, many of these organizations flourished because they learned how to initiate and administer publicly supported social programs which addressed specific needs in our communities. Indeed, Puerto Rican non-profit organizations have contributed greatly to the socioeconomic development of Puerto Ricans across the United States.

However, at present many of these organizations find themselves in the difficult position of being highly dependent on public sector funding for much of their support. With the enactment of the first round of federal cutbacks in 1982 the viability of many of these organizations was seriously threatened. Now it appears that more cutbacks on social spending might be necessary thereby further eroding the ability of many of these organizations to deliver much needed social services

Because these organizations represent a resource for the delivery of vital services, because they constitute an enduring source of leadership for the future, it is imperative that we work for their continued existence. In the years ahead we must devote considerable attention and resources toward meeting this

challenge. Of particular emphasis here is assisting many of these organizations to expand and diversify their financial bases through broadened private sector support—e.g. national foundations, corporations, community foundations, and participation in United Way efforts.

A major thrust of NPRC's efforts will focus on providing training and technical assistance to Puerto Rican organizations in two areas of identifiable need: (1) organizational management and development, and, (2) resource development including diversification of funding. NPRC's training and technical assistance represents a long-range effort which should strengthen our community's organizational capability to deal with unanticipated problems, needs, and opportunities.

Safeguarding and expanding employment and training opportunities is another major challenge faced by our community. As Professor Tienda aptly documented in her paper—"The Puerto Rican Worker: Current Labor Status and Future Prospects"—Puerto Ricans suffer from extreme deprivation in the labor market, the lamentable fact is that Puerto Ricans continue to suffer disproportionately high levels of unemployment, and even those Puerto Ricans fortunate enough to have jobs are often trapped in positions that offer little pay and upward mobility.

In recognizing the need to expand training and employment opportunities for Puerto Ricans. We must work with both the public and private sector in exploring alternative solutions. One approach as suggested by Professor Tienda is to take advantage of whatever opportunities—such as the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)—are in place. Local Puerto Rican constituencies must coordinate with state and national level Puerto Rican organizations to monitor implementation of JTPA so as to assure that Puerto Ricans are able to participate to the fullest extent possible. Another approach is to challenge private industry to play a more active and vigorous role in creating job training opportunities for community residents. A notable example of what can be accomplished with some commitment is offered by the Schering-Plough Corporation who along with 18 other companies in New Jersey cooperated in support of a private sector non-profit organization—the Technical Training Project—to prepare young adults for careers in science and technology.

As Dr. Jose Hernandez pointed out in his paper on youth, Puerto Rican communities across the United States and Puerto Rico are also faced with an educational crisis of major proportion. For too long the problem of educational retention and access to educational opportunities has hampered the socioeconomic development of generations of Puerto Ricans. At present, our community is faced with intolerably high rates of school dropout, low rates of college attendance and graduation, and, high rates of functional illiteracy. This is a crucial area in which we must coalesce with other minority groups to ensure that educational improvements benefit our children.

As the American economy becomes even more complex the extent of this crisis will become proportionately more acute. The changing structure of the American economy will require a corresponding increase in the minimal skill requirements for workers. Therefore, those with educational deficiencies and minimal skills increasingly will be unable to participate in the work force until the basic literacy and functional abilities are improved. Educative programs need to be improved and expanded in order that our community benefits from both excellence and equity in educational programming.

Related to securing expanded employment and educational opportunities for our people is the creation of opportunities for community economic development. As used here community economic development refers to the process by which members of a society, through collective action, increase the level of their economic and social well being over time. It is a process which assumes that the involvement of community residents is one of the critical ingredients in the institutional arrangements that are necessary in the development process.

In this regard NPRC supports program initiatives such as enterprise zones designed to promote urban economic development. Consistent with our definition of community economic development it is imperative that any enterprise zone legislation provide for significant participation of community-based organizations. After all only such organizations can negotiate the sort of trade-offs needed to ensure that investments in the zone meet reasonable tests of both efficiency and equity. Also, as suggested by Professor Tienda, efforts must be made to promote Puerto Ricans ownership of small businesses which support the community by providing jobs to other Puerto Ricans.

Any economic development strategy for Puerto Ricans must include the promotion of renewed economic vitality in Puerto Rico. The economic health of Puerto Rico effects the stateside communities because of the relationship between the island's economy and migration patterns. NPRC has strongly advocated for federal programs and private investments which promote economic development in the island. Indeed, if Puerto Ricans are to break away from the pernicious effects engendered by the emerging circular migration pattern, it is imperative that we support efforts designed to prevent any further erosion of Puerto Rico's economic base.

In outlining the challenges Puerto Ricans in the United States and Puerto Rico must face during the balance of this decade we would emphasize several principles which guide our collective action. First, while we commit ourselves to promoting alternative solutions to our problems—such as through community and economic development, these must not come at the expense of basic human service programs. At least not while Puerto Ricans are still singled out as one of the most disadvantaged ethnic groups. Second, while we accept the challenges facing us we are convinced that the federal government must continue to play a sustained and conscious role in providing equal opportunities for our community. Third, as Dr. Hernandez pointed out in his paper on youth, the Puerto

Rican leadership must enlist the cooperation of the media, or in lieu of this, create its own multi-media campaign, to "recast the Puerto Rican image."

The challenge to American society is clear. We are committed to working with the broader society in finding solutions to our problems. In turn, American society must reach out to draw a long neglected group of citizens into more productive position throughout its social order and into full participation with all its institutions. Only then will the true meaning of a pluralistic society be achieved.

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